

GUIDE
TO THE
PRIORY CHURCH
OF
ST. ANDREW, HEXHAM,
BY
CHARLES CLEMENT HODGES.



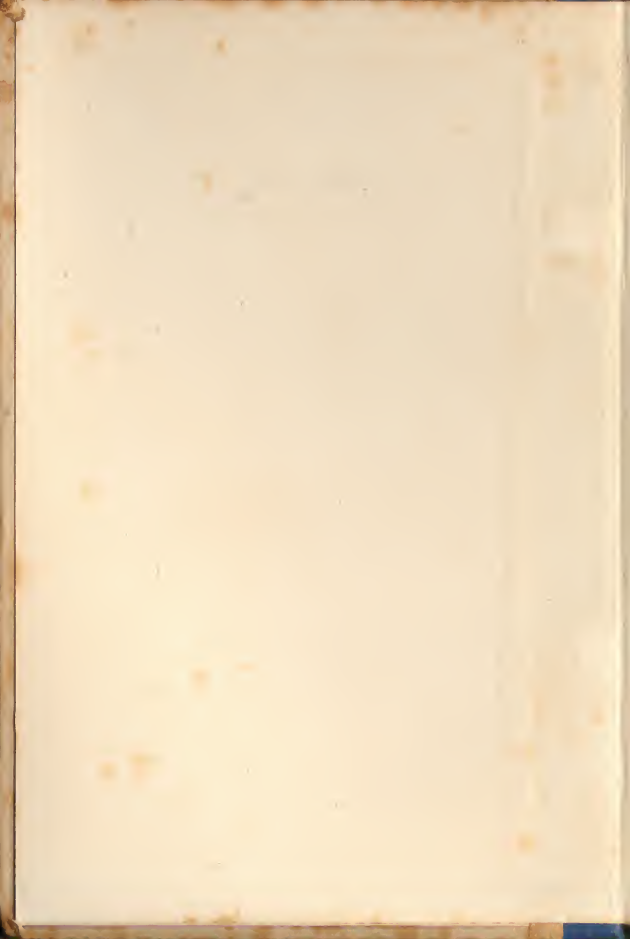
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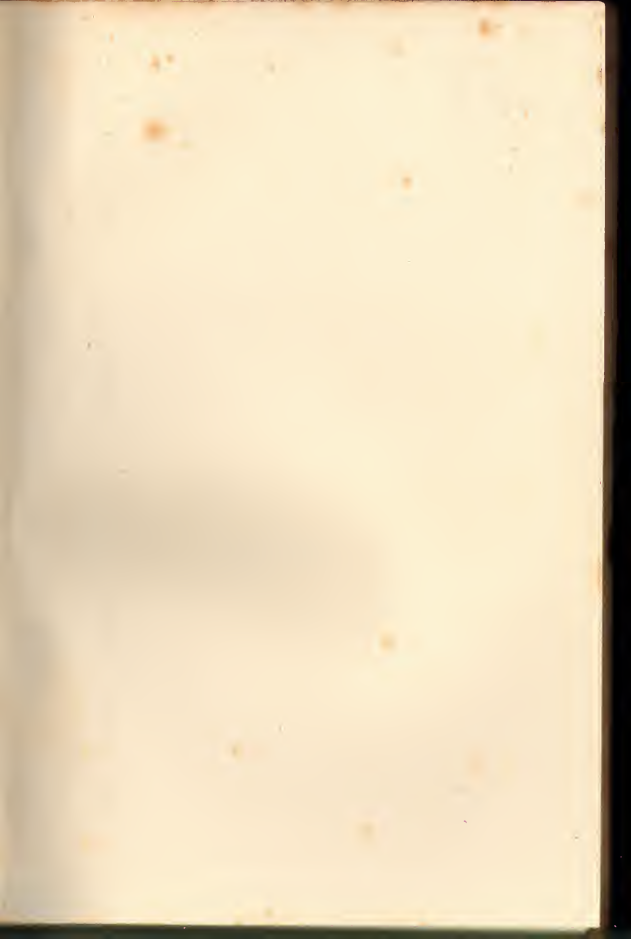
SECOND EDITION.

REVISED BY JOHN GIBSON, F.S.A.

HEXHAM : GIBSON & SON, THE OLD PHARMACY.

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1921.







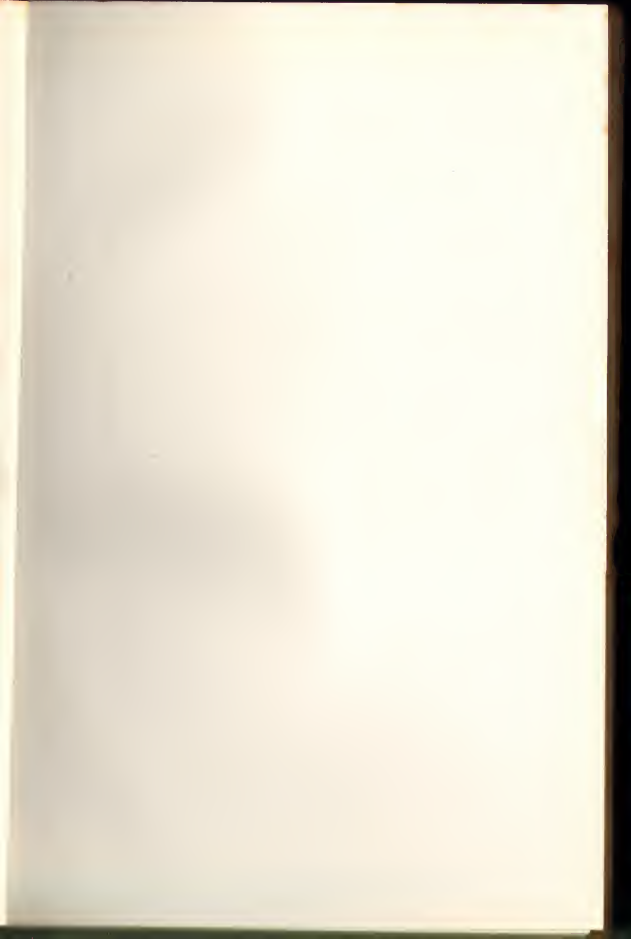
Guide
TO THE
Priory Church
OF
Saint Andrew
Herham.

FIRST EDITION,
1913.

SECOND EDITION,
1921.

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PRINTED BY
R. ROBSON & SONS,
THE ABBEY PRESS,
HEXHAM.





ALTAR TOMB AND EFFIGY OF PRIOR LESCHMAN.

GUIDE
TO THE
PRIORY CHURCH
OF
ST. ANDREW, HEXHAM,
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE
TOWN OF HEXHAM,

BY
CHARLES CLEMENT HODGES,

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WITH THIRTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS.

SECOND EDITION.

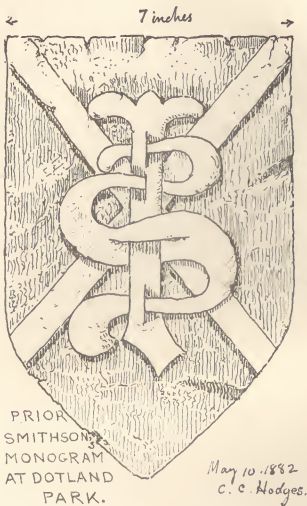
REVISED BY JOHN GIBSON, F.S.A.,

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*Joint Author of Hexham and its Abbey, 1919.
Author of Notes on Hexham Abbey, 1920.*

HEXHAM: GIBSON & SON, THE OLD PHARMACY.

—
1921.



Shield, bearing the monogram of Prior Thomas Smithson combined with the arms of the Priory; from a window at Dotland Park, at one time a summer residence and hunting lodge of the priors. The present house still retains some interesting fifteenth century features.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

PERSONALLY, I feel it a privilege to have the opportunity of writing, for a second time, a Guide to Hexham.

The preface to the first guide, long out of print, is dated 1880. Undreamt of changes have since taken place in the old town, and still greater changes in that wonderful fabric, its greatest attraction, the Priory Church.

The primary object of this book has been to provide a concise and accurate guide for visitors. But as so long a time has elapsed since the appearance of any work of reference dealing with the Priory, I have added a short glossary of some of the more unusual and technical terms, necessary in describing any ancient building, which will be of some use to students.

It is mainly due to the untiring energy and zeal of the Rector, the Rev. Canon Bridges, M.A., that the church has been brought to its present and excellent condition, and it is a pleasure to record his constant and general aid and facilities necessary for making the Guide.

I am also indebted to the Rev. Canon Greenwell for allowing me to quote here and there his valuable address on the early history of Hexham, delivered at an archaeological meeting held on the 17th June 1880. This is incorporated in the introductory chapter. Also to Messrs. A. G. and H. F. Lockhart, for allowing me to show and examine the Moot Hall, now freed from all modern encroachments. Also to Mr. Robert Blair, F.S.A., editor of the *Journal of Antiquaries*, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, for permission to quote the valuable paper by the late J. P. Gibson, F.S.A., on "The ruins of the Priory Church of St Andrew, Hexham"; from *Archæologia Aeliana*.

CHARLES CLEMENT HODGES.

Hexham.

10th July, 1911

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE increasing desire for a more intimate knowledge of the varying characteristics of the mediæval monastic houses remaining in Great Britain, has accelerated the demand for a Second Edition of this Guide. Few ecclesiastical foundations possess such a long drawn and changeful history, dating from the Seventh to the Twentieth Century, as the Priory Church of St. Andrew at Hexham. It is undoubtedly one of the architectural glories of our land, as well as one of the principal historic monuments of English Christianity. Considerable additions, and some deletions, have been necessary to make this edition of the Guide more comprehensive. The Glossary is superseded by an Index, which will prove of greater service alike to the student, the antiquary, and the general reader.

Mr. W. G. Collingwood, M.A., F.S.A., whose able and gifted contributions have added much to our knowledge of the growth and development of Early Christian Monumental Art, has kindly lent his "Suggested Restoration of Anglian Fragments at Hexham and Durham," which appears on Page 111, and I am grateful for his most valued assistance. Thanks are also due to the Rector of Hexham, the Rev. J. V. C. Farquhar, B.A., for facilities afforded for taking the photographs on Plates v. and xii.

The remaining photographs were all taken by my late father, J. P. Gibson, F.S.A., or myself, during the memorable incumbency of the Rev. Canon Savage, M.A., and I desire to place on record my deep sense of appreciation for the facilities which he at all times readily accorded, and for much kindness extended over many years.

J. G.

Hexham,

18th September, 1921.

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*The Plans and Line Drawings are by
Charles Clement Hodges, Architect.*

CHAPTER I.

Introductory.

HEXHAM stands on rocks belonging to the uppermost portion of the Carboniferous Limestone, or Bernician Series. These rocks are chiefly sandstone and shales, and limestone is not to be seen nearer than Dilston. Beacon Grange, on the hill immediately south of the town, is on Millstone Grit, and from Yarridge to Black Hill on the west, and Yarridge to Black House on the east, there is a small outcrop of true coal measures, brought in by the great east and west fault, known as Stublick Syke, and running about a third of a mile south of Beacon Grange. These coal measures are not worked, as they belong to the poorest division of the series of gannister beds. Coals occur on the other hand in the Carboniferous Limestone Series. A thin seam was formerly worked at Oakwood on the north side of the Tyne, as was another valuable seam at Acomb, in the same neighbourhood. Good fossil plants can be found in the sandstones and shales of the limestone series in Oakwood quarries, a little north of Hexham Bridge End. On both sides of the river, terraces of post glacial river gravels, made up of re-assorted glacial drift, brought chiefly from Cumberland and Scotland, are conspicuous. The terracing in three distinct slopes attains a very considerable level above the present alluvium of the Tyne, and is very plain. Building stone is plentiful at Fellside, south of the town, but better and harder beds of the same series lie further to the east. The Black Pasture

Quarry, near Chollerford, an ancient quarry worked during the Roman occupation, is still open.

Hexham and its neighbourhood has always been a "happy hunting ground" of the archæologist. The late Canon Greenwell, D.C.L., F.R.S., F.S.A., Durham, was an eminent authority on the early history of Hexham. In a presidential address which he gave in the priory church to the members of the Architectural and Archæological Society of Durham and Northumberland, on the 24th June, 1886, he said : " He had paid great attention to what were called the prehistoric times, about which they knew nothing, except from things which had been left to them, times when there was no writing, and therefore no record of things. These times had engaged his attention to a much greater extent than the Roman, Saxon, and Mediæval times. He had occupied a great portion of his life, and on no account the most unpleasant part, in examining the remains of the pre-historic times.

"Hexham was situated in the valley of the Tyne, which was very rich in good loam and very early, as they had all their vegetables from the neighbourhood of Hexham and Corbridge. In fact, it was eminently adapted for early occupation. There were also high lands in the neighbourhood, which, in those times, being covered with whins, heather, and remains of primæval woods, afforded any amount of shelter for wild beasts ; the deer, wild swine, and others. Such a district, eminently suited to early occupation and habitation, was sure to afford evidences of such habitation, and there was considerable evidence to prove it. Close by Hexham itself there had



TYNE BRIDGE, HEXHAM.



been found several burial places of those people who lived here long before the occupation of the country by the Romans. Both burnt and unburnt bodies had been found, associated with a peculiar class of pottery, which these people used. In some cases a vessel of pottery had been found which encased the remains of a burnt body, and in other cases the body was accompanied by a vessel of pottery which had contained what appeared to have been food for the use of the departed brother. The ash that was found at the bottom of these vessels was in some cases of animal, and in others of vegetable, origin. In one instance he knew a vessel was found in Scotland containing a spoon. No one would suppose that the dead would require to use the food in the ordinary condition in which it was placed in the tomb, but these people thought that everything had a spirit ; even a sword, which had a material substance, had also a spirit ; so that when they placed these articles with the dead in the tomb it was upon the supposition that they would be needed for the spiritual battle in the spiritual world into which they had gone. Besides these remains, there was a very remarkable one found at the junction of the two Tynes. Many stone and flint implements, such as knives and arrow heads, had from time to time been found, which clearly showed that Hexham and the surrounding district had been occupied by man during the stone age.

“They next came to the period of metal. At a certain period people got to know that there was a material in various rocks, and in the soil about them, which, after undergoing certain processes, might be made

into a weapon. How the discovery was made no one knew, but the knowledge that certain ores would produce a metal came to light. Then came the bronze age, in which implements and weapons were made of a mixture of nine parts copper and one part tin.

"After the time of bronze came the period of iron, the ore of which had not so metallic an appearance as that of copper, hence its use was not known until long after the time when copper and tin were used in various parts of the world. They knew when the Romans came, and they knew that at that time both copper and iron were in use by them and by the inhabitants of these lands also. At a time when weapons and implements were being made of iron, ornaments were still being made of bronze.

"Coming to the Roman period, he was of opinion that there was not a Roman settlement at Hexham, and that all the Roman stones here came from Corstopitum. He believed that every stone in the crypt had been in the hands of the Romans, and that the draining tiles found were really conduit tiles, and were of Saxon, not Roman work. It was not impossible that there was some sort of out-lying post at Hexham, but he did not think it probable, as there was no road of the Roman period between the two places, and he thought they might put aside the notion that Hexham had been a Roman station. He did not wish to deprive Hexham of any honour, but he thought Hexham had quite enough honour of her own, without adding to it that of being a Roman settlement.

"We come now to a time when Hexham was a place of very great importance. This was after the invasion of

England by the Teutonic people, the Saxons, Angles, Jutes, and others. Hexham was in that part of the country which was occupied by the Angles, and this extended from the south of Yorkshire to the Firth of Forth, as well as Norfolk and Suffolk. The Saxon tribes belonged to some old family known as Teutonic, and occupied the low parts of England, Sussex, Middlesex, and whilst in Kent were the Jutes. The Irish were a part of the Angles, also a Teutonic speaking people. Patrick played a very important part in the introduction of Christianity into England. After the defeat of Edwin, by Penda, King of Mercia, Christianity was again introduced by Oswald, who defeated Cadwalla at Hefenfeld, near the Roman Wall. Oswald was succeeded by Oswy, who introduced Christianity into the whole Kingdom of Northumbria by the missionaries from Iona, who followed the Roman rite.

Oswy died in 670, and was succeeded by Egfrid, who was the patron of Wilfrid, a man endowed with the highest qualities, and although he may be blamed to some extent for somewhat rough dealings, yet he was one of the greatest men that had been connected with our church in England, and Hexham was very peculiarly connected with him on account of his having built this great church. At that time very many stone churches at that period, the greater number at that time being built of wood. The two churches at Jarrow and at Monkwearmouth were previously recorded, and were spoken of as Roman churches, and Wilfrid's great stone church at Hexham was called a "Basilica of Roman work."

"At Hexham were considerable remains of Anglo-Saxon sculpture, principally in portions of the shafts of crosses, which stood at the heads of graves. They were found all over the country, as far south as Derby, and still further, but were most numerous in the lands lying north of the Humber, and south of the Firth of Forth, than anywhere else. They should remember that the Saxon period extended from the beginning of the seventh century until 1066, so that they might expect to find a great diversity in the works of the several sections of that long period.

"In Hexham they were remarkably rich in this class of gravestone, because the best and earliest specimens had been found here. There must have been at Hexham a school of art which belonged specially to it. It was quite possible that a large number of stones found at other places came from Hexham, or were produced by artists from Hexham.

"It was a class of stone ornament which divided itself into perhaps three sub-classes of ornamentation. One was interlacing work, consisting of a band crossing again and again, sometimes associated with animal forms of the serpent kind. This was largely based on late Roman mosaic work, but was greatly influenced by Irish work, as Ireland was at that time, not only the centre of the cultivation of Christianity, but also a great centre of art.

"In succession to this came another, which to a large extent was found in its purity, and mixed with others, and that was an ornament which was composed of flowing foliage work, graceful in the extreme, and whilst not so complicated as the other, was still quite as beautiful.

They had at one time some very exquisite specimens of this work at Hexham, but which were now at Durham. They had the most beautiful examples of that work, which were at least originated at Hexham. They had some examples of the great crosses at Bewcastle, and at Ruthwell, in Dumfriesshire. On the Acca Cross now at Durham there is ornamentation which was purely of foliage, and representing the vine. The vine is represented in the most graceful form, intertwined with bunches of grapes hanging down from each stem. In other crosses the foliage becomes more or less of the tree form, in which birds are sitting feeding at the fruit of the tree, and although he did not think they were perhaps quite as graceful as the pure foliage work, yet nevertheless they ran them very close to each other.

The golden days of Hexham came to a close with the Danish invasion in 875, when St. Wilfrid's great basilica was burned, and not repaired until late in the eleventh century. It was at that time a parish church. The Austin Canons came from Yorkshire in 1112, and the Prior and Convent began the repair of St. Wilfrid's church, which, in 1153, they lengthened by the addition of a northern choir. This extension was destroyed when the western choir was built between 1175-1180, and the remainder of the priory church was finished in the thirteenth century. After considerable resistance on the part of the Canons, led by the Master of Ovingham, the dissolution of the Priory was effected in September, 1536.

It may be well to conclude this chapter by quoting the

penultimate paragraph in the late C. J. Bates's "History of Northumberland," written in 1895.

"The fatal subjection of the country to the town, which has become the ruling feature of modern English life, was emphasized on the partition by Parliament of the ancient diocese of Durham, in 1882. Instead of a see of the first rank being established in Northumberland, where the origins of English Christianity still throw a halo round Lindisfarne, and where the Priory Church of Hexham, with its nave rebuilt, would form a real cathedral, the ambition of Newcastle to rank as a city was gratified by a bishop's stool being set up in a typical parish church under the patronage of St. Nicholas of Myra, a saint in no way connected with Northumbrian history."





HEXHAM PRIORY CHURCH, FROM THE SOUTH.



CHAPTER II.

Description of the Exterior of the Priory Church.

THE most pleasing distant views of the town and the Priory are those obtained from the high ground to the north and south ; on the south side from Gallows Bank, half a mile from the Market Place towards the south east, and from Fellside and Delegate Cottage further east : from the north bank of the Tyne, from Lady Cross Bank and High Warden, the former on the east and the latter on the west side of the North Tyne respectively.

The area enclosed by the precinct wall of the Priory, traces of which still exist, though nowhere to its full height, was nearly fourteen acres, and within its bounds were all the buildings necessary for the shelter, maintenance and comfort of the members of the community who constituted or were attached to the Priory.

Hexham Priory, like the greater number of English cathedrals and monastic houses, was on the outskirts of the mediæval town, but in recent years extensive suburbs have grown up on every side of it.

The site chosen was a nearly level plateau, 75 feet above the level of the river, and 176 feet above sea level. From this prescribed area the ground rises to the south until the high ground bounding the river valley is reached at a distance of rather more than a mile.

The visitor to Hexham will naturally wend his way to the Priory Church, and adopt the archæologist's mode

of first proceeding round the exterior before entering the building.

Hexham Priory, is, fortunately, one of the great churches which is accessible to visitors on all sides.

Exterior of the Choir.

The north side of the choir may first be examined. The aisle wall is a plain but bold conception dating not earlier than 1175-1180, and is in consequence a late specimen of what has been termed the "Transitional" period in the evolution of the English Gothic style of architecture. The wall above the base course is divided into three stages; the lower is blank, the next contains a single window in each bay. These windows are much wider in proportion to their height than were lancet windows in the succeeding "Early English" period. They are well designed and have moulded arches carried by detached shafts in the jambs. The capitals have square abaci and the lower member of the bases is also square. The hood moulding is carried as a string course along the wall and over the buttresses, which are broad and flat, with one inset just over the string, and is continued up to the cornice without any ornaments or headings. Between them are corbels, six to each bay, but eight in the last bay. This last was rebuilt in 1858 as it was seriously out of plumb. Its original condition, and the pinnacle with square spirelet, which embraced the north-east angle are shown on Plate 9, of the writer's Monograph, "*The Abbey of St. Andrew, Hexham.*" 1888.* Below the third window from the east

* Subsequently referred to as the "Monograph."

is to be seen a built up archway, the arch being flush with the wall. The straight joint of the jamb is seen to pass through the base course, as when opened out this archway was clear to the ground. It was used as a carthole by means of which the building material was carried in during the erection of the choir.† The choir clerestory is of good design, consisting of an arcade of three members in each bay, with well moulded arches upon detached shafts, having moulded caps and bases. The centre arches are wider than those flanking them, and pierced for windows. The buttresses are of the flat pilaster form and terminate beneath the corbel table with triangular heads, the mouldings being ornamented with sunk trefoils and quatrefoils. The cornice rests on a line of corbels and carries a plain parapet with a moulded coping.

The East Front.

The east front faces the Market Place, and was erected 1508-1560, at the expense of the late Mr. W. B. Fountaine, M.P., afterwards first Lord Allendale, Lord of the Manor and Lay Rector. Some old views of it exist and have been reproduced, and may be obtained at the town. The design of the present east front is an adaptation of the east wall of the choir of Whitby Abbey.

There were some courses in 1858 of the late twelfth century east wall at Hexham, which had been effaced by the subsequent reconstructions and additions. It probably had two tiers of lancet windows of a much

† These cartholes are often found in the long naves of the Abbey churches notably at Fountains.

bolder and heavier type than the present ones, and there is every reason to assume that the upper lancets were of the height of the clerestory and triforium, and the lower lancets the height of the main arcade, as at Rievaulx Abbey.

South Side of the Choir.

The eastern bay of the south choir aisle is modern, being rebuilt in 1858-1860, as it was in bad repair and out of the perpendicular. It contained formerly a three-light traceried window, which was removed to insert a copy of the older lancets, for until the present nave was erected Hexham Priory Church could not show any window tracery, except shattered and detached fragments.

In the next two bays the remains of alterations made to allow the erection of a sacristy, which projected from the wall and had a low roof, are indicated by the corbels inserted in the wall, which supported its wall-plate. The cut-away buttress and base course tell their own story.

The sacristy was reached from the church by a doorway, which formerly opened into it and which was not walled up until 1830. It was re-opened in 1908, and is used as a chancel door. The clerestory is similar to the north side, already described. The south side is in a very advanced state of decay, but the details are not so clearly seen as on the north, all the detached shafts remain, except one, and on the south eight only have survived. This difference is partly due to the friable nature of the local sandstone used in the building, and is also affected by the action of the sun following upon frost, which has a very deleterious effect upon masonry. The

can never strikes the north side in winter, consequently it escapes this source of damage.

The roofs are, in the case of the aisles, of the original pitch, but the main roofs are all of a lower pitch than the originals, which were burnt off in 1296, and the aisle windows have disappeared at some unrecorded period, which is unfortunate, as well as unsightly. The roof of the eastern bay is neither the pitch of the ancient roof, nor of its fourteenth century successor, a bay of the roof of the later period having been destroyed to admit of its insertion.

The South Transept.

The east side of the South Transept adds to the interest of inspection, as there are many unusual features. The aisle wall has three bays. The two to the north contain large and wide lancet windows, with well moulded arches and detached shafts in the jambs. The hood moulding, or hood, is continued along the wall and around the buttresses as a string-course, but dies into the wall when the southern wall is reached. The boldly projecting buttresses are of square octagonal form, but change to flat pilasters before they reach the corbel table. The point of change is emphasized by one of the most beautiful pieces of detail which this church possesses. The manner in which the little gablets are used, is an example of the skill of the medieval craftsman in dealing with the graduations of a buttress effectively. The base course is of equal merit with the other details of this pleasing specimen of early Gothic. The southern bay of this aisle is not in direct

communication with the church, but forms the east wall of the slype, the passage through the church which communicates with the cloister, the use of which will be explained when the buildings surrounding the cloister garth are reached. The external features are a semi-circular headed doorway of somewhat small size, with narrow square headed windows on either side. Above the doorway is a segmental pointed arch, now built up, which once was a window. It is the only piece of the modern filling in of numerous windows which escaped removal during the "restorations" of the nineteenth century. In the upper storey are two similar small square headed windows.

The clerestory is full of character and interest, but is by no means so fine as that of the choir. The differences are partly due to the evident necessity for considerable economy at the time of its erection. The detached shafts with well moulded caps and bases, seen in the choir, are here replaced by semi-octagonal pilasters coursed with the wall; the caps are quite plain and of slight projection, there being no bases, but the pilasters are mitred to the sills. The cornice is a moulded projection supported on a range of corbels with a trefoil moulding. The parapet is of a later date than all below it, and was doubtless erected in the 15th century, when the present transept roofs were renewed, at which time the aisle parapets probably disappeared.

The south end of this transept has had a changeful history, but is still of absorbing interest. Extending southwards are the remains of the eastern claustral build-

The whole of the lower part of the wall is almost beyond of detail. At its base is the arcade of the vestibule to the chapterhouse. Above the vestibule, is still to be seen a built-up doorway, which gave access to the church from the dormitory of the canons. In the upper portion and the gable are three plain long lancets. The lower part of the central lancet was encroached upon by the roof of the canons' dormitory. Previous to Easter Sunday, 1878, the old ashlar of the wall was intact, but owing to want of food in the walls and a settlement set up in the first instance by the burning off of the adjoining roofs, and subsequently by the action of water in the foundations, the ashlar fell away, and a large area had to be refaced with new stone. Prior to this unfortunate fall of the wall however, the projecting weathering of the dormitory roof was intact, and is shown on old drawings and photographs. The cornice surmounting the gable was apparently of eighteenth century date, and this has since been repaired; the pinnacles crowning the angles and the greater part of the trade up buttresses were rebuilt in 1910.

Passing to the west side, we are confronted with a noble elevation abounding in interest. In monastic churches, the west wall of the eastern range adjoining the cloister possesses characteristics of its own. At Hexham this has survived to our own day with slight damage, and considerable change of appearance. A stone arch, parts of which remain, was carried the full length of the wall, past the vestibule of the chapterhouse doorway, as far as the angle of the refectory which closed the west side of the cloisters. The wall above is divided into

four stages by string courses. The lowest carries a blank arcade of $13\frac{1}{2}$ arches. The half arch at the north end is one of those unsightly blunders which we must refer to again in the description of the interior of the church. Doorways are seen at either end of this arcade; one at the south leads directly into the slype, and the other, which is built up, was the eastern processional doorway of the cloister. A line of eight hook corbels which carried the wall plate of the penthouse roof of the east alley of the cloisters is above the arcade. The weathering of the roof of the cloister is immediately over these corbels, and now appears as a string course. Six courses of plain ashlar above are interrupted by another string course, which is stepped up at its south end to avoid a window in the newel stair in the south-west angle.

Four large lancets, doubly recessed, are in the next stage, with plain continuous chamfers carried all round. A little higher is another string course, and then comes the clerestory of similar design, but bolder in detail than the clerestory on the east side of the south transept. The cornice and parapet crowning the wall are of the same character and dates as on the east side of the same transept.

The Tower.

The exterior of the tower is broad and low, as befitted most church towers in the north country, the reason being that they were considered less conspicuous and safer for the dwellers in the monastic houses, as the days of Scandinavian marauders were by no means past when

Hexham and other north country churches prospered. The tower is of two stages only, surmounted by a cornice and embattled parapet. The stage above the roof of the four wings of the church carries the weathering, or housing of the roofs, as at first built or intended. The remaining features are a series of small doorways giving access to the four newel stairs in the angles from the gutters. These doorways are now all closed but one, and three of the newel stairs have been built up. Small openings for the purpose of ventilating the roofs are immediately below the apex of the roof weatherings. These now appear above the later or modern roofs. The important stage contains an arcade of five members with moulded arches, three of which are blank. The other two are wider and are pierced for the belfry windows or openings. Formerly these latter were divided by a mullion which bifurcated at the head and died into the arch mouldings. Part of these mullions remain where they were worked out of the same stone heads as the arches they met. The mouldings, as well as some of the details of this stage, vary in a most singular and unaccountable manner on the different faces of the tower. In some cases the capitals of the shafts in the piers are unfinished, but on two sides the mullions are plainly chamfered instead of being moulded. Clear evidence of the tower having been built in two sections has recently been determined, a considerable interval undoubtedly having intervened between the erection of the first and second stage. Some parts of the arcade belong to the first period, and some to the second. The stage is embraced by flat buttresses, which terminate

in plain slopes before they reach the corbel table. The corbels vary somewhat in their details as they do in number, on the various sides. They support a well-moulded cornice, which in turn carries a fine lofty parapet, and the coping. This parapet is of two courses in the embrasures, and four in the merlons. The stumps of square pinnacles remain at each angle, one course high above the coping of the parapet. These stumps carried square spirelets, which disappeared at some unknown period, and have never been restored. In the main the pyramidal roof is of later date than the walls, being probably of lower pitch than its predecessor. The lead was stripped off and Westmorland slates substituted in 1810. The vane is very probably one of the many items of Sir Walter Blackett's great and memorable repair of 1725-1730.*

The Nave.

The south wall of the intended fourteenth century and later accomplished twentieth century nave, now claims attention. At its east end, adjoining the south transept, the wall is for a short distance, and diminishing in extent as it rises, of the same build as the south transept wall. This shows that enough was erected at that time to form an abutment to the tower, and crossing arches. The lower portion of the remainder of the wall westward is of the end of the fourteenth, and beginning of the fifteenth century, and this, and parts of the west wall, form the scanty remains of the nave attempted at that time, and

* Money was being collected on a brief in 1723.

intended to replace the main body of St. Wilfrid's Cathedral, which was then in a more or less ruined condition. "The Chronicle of Lanercost," written at Carlisle soon after 1346, proves that "St. Wilfrid's Roman Basilica," as it is there described, was then standing. Two interesting features are seen in this lower stage. In the centre of the wall length is a wide recess of considerable depth, with square jambs and a boldly moulded arch. This contained the carrells, or reading desks, closets, or pews of the canons, whatever form they might take. The uses of carrells are fully described in the well known "Rites of Durham," and their position is to be seen in the great monastic cloisters of Bristol and Gloucester Cathedrals. The hood moulding of the arch of the carrells is carried along the wall as a string course, and above appears the line of corbels for the cloister roof, some of which are ancient, but most of them are of the time of the present nave. At the west end, close to the angle, is the western processional doorway of the cloister, which has well moulded jambs, and the mouldings are continuous round the arch. Two small bases are in each jamb at the foot of the bead mouldings. This doorway was closed and opened out at the rebuilding of the nave. A range of two-light windows in pairs fenestrate the middle stage, their hood mouldings being continued as a string course. The clerestory has five three-light windows, between which are flat pilaster buttresses, rising from the inset above the third string course and finishing under the cornice with gablets. The roof is plain with a moulded coping.

The West Front.

The west front, facing the constabulary drill ground, is in some respects the most interesting part of the exterior, as it fortunately retains a portion of the west wall of St. Wilfrid's Cathedral *in situ*, which is a survival of inestimable value. Presumably it escaped removal in this way. Monastic churches were usually built from east to west, the choir with its adjuncts first, next the eastern range, then the southern, and lastly the western. The eastern range at Hexham is contemporary with the south transept. The destroyed south range, and lower part of the western range, were erected before the disastrous incendiary raid of 1296. As St Wilfrid's Church was then in great measure standing, the angle of the western range of claustral buildings, at that time in course of erection, naturally abutted upon it, and in the older wall, a length of the base moulding of the projected nave was inserted, and returned downwards where it met the west doorway. Three courses of ashlar above this base course were at the same time inserted, and the rest of the older wall was left in. This took place at the close of the thirteenth century. Another effort to build a nave was made a century later, and a considerable amount of work was done. For some reason five courses of the wall of St. Wilfrid's day escaped removal, and the later work was placed upon them. These five courses are of Roman worked stone, and give us the surface, as the foundations uncovered in 1907 give the lines of the west end of that great church which made Hexham so celebrated a place

all through the Saxon and Mediæval periods. The west doorway is of small size for so large a church, and the lower portions of both jambs are the ancient ones retained. On the north of the doorway the fourteenth or fifteenth century base course, of quite different character to that on the south, is visible. A great buttress had been erected to partially counteract the thrust of the main arcade of the nave. All the old masonry in this buttress which could be left, was retained. It stands on an extensive foundation of great Roman stones, used in the building of the Saxon church. Some of these are *in situ*, and mark the position of one of St. Wilfrid's western towers. Above the doorway is the great west window of five lights, with flowing tracery.* The angles are crowned with octagonal pinnacles, and the gable is surmounted by a large floriated cross.

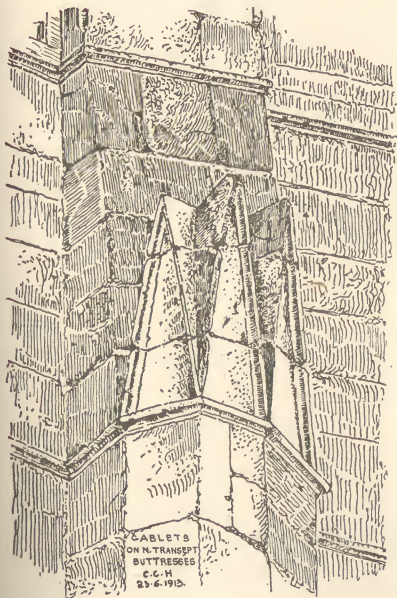
The nave aisle wall, eastward from the doorway in the western bay, is built upon a long stretch of the lower courses of the outer wall of St. Wilfrid's nave of a thickness of 2ft. 8ins., a characteristic Saxon dimension. Some part of the plinth and the lowest stones of the jambs of the nave aisle doorway are old work retained. For the purpose of preservation, a number of Roman stones are inserted in the aisle wall. Some of these are sections of the fluted pilasters from the sides of the gateways at *COESTOPITUM*. Others are pieces of finely dressed columns and bold mouldings from the larger buildings of the buried town. The nave aisle wall has five three-light

* This window has recently been filled with stained glass as a memorial to the late Charles William Chipchase Henderson, of Hexham, by his widow.

traceries of various patterns. The clerestory is the same as on the south side, and the parapet is plain. A turret carrying a newel stair marks the angle.

The North Transept.

The west side of the north transept is of noble proportions and the details are so arranged as to display the design to the greatest advantage. The rugged and stern character of the Border architecture of the Middle Ages, is shown in this section of the fabric, which has some counterparts on the Scottish side, notably Pluscardyn Abbey, Jedburgh Abbey, and Abberborthock Abbey. The base course is of great size and elaboration, being the only one in England decorated with the "dog tooth" ornament. The built up arch from the nave aisle to the transept, occupying the south bay, was opened out on the erection of the present nave. The three bays which are clear of the aisle are separated by great buttresses. The plinths are square, but the course above them is worked with very good carved leaves in the angles, a most unusual external feature. Above these carvings the buttresses are canted; they are interrupted by a bold string-course at a height of nine courses from the base, and at a much higher point are reduced in bulk by a moulded cornice and inset. Five courses higher another change occurs; here three steep moulded gablets crown the three cants, and form one of the most charming features of this elevation. The late Sir George Edmund Street told the writer that he considered this "one of the most beautiful bits of 'Early English' detail in England." Above the



gablets, the buttresses are sloped to the wall, and then rise past the clerestory as flat pilasters and terminate under the corbel table with gabled heads. The three long windows are among the longest lancet windows to be seen anywhere. A few Scottish abbeys have windows of similar length, but they are neither so finely developed, nor so deeply set in the wall, which here approaches $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet in thickness. The two chamfers of the jambs are carried round the arches. The hood mould is continued as a string-course around the buttresses, passing over the angle to the north face, where it is merged into the wall at the inner angle of the buttress on the north.

The clerestory is almost identical with that of the south transept, but is loftier, and its arcade rises to less than one course from the cornice. The buttress heads reach the lower side of the corbels. The parapet, like that of the south transept, is of late and uncertain date. The angles are crowned with octagonal pinnacles, with plain spires, rebuilt under the writer's direction in 1899, which are of somewhat better proportions than those at the south gable.

The north-west angle is insufficiently strengthened by flat shallow buttresses to the west and north. It contains a newel stair from the floor of the transept. The lower part was built up solid in 1905, as at that time the whole angle was unsafe. The stair is lighted by three small loops on the west side ; the lower one being pointed and moulded, the upper two plain and square headed.

Turning to the north, we are confronted with a lofty and richly detailed elevation of great character. The

main portion of the base course is modern (1869). The plain stage above it formerly contained a fine arched doorway of Renaissance character, inserted towards the end of the seventeenth century. Upon the lintel were shields bearing the arms of the See of York, Hexham Priory, Newcastle, and the Mercers' Company, (the Blessed Virgin, with flowing hair, wearing a crown). This doorway was erected at the cost of the Mercers' Company, and was removed in 1869.

The principal part of the north front is the fine stage, equal to almost half the total height. This has a richly detailed arcade of seven members, three of which are pierced for windows, very long and beautifully proportioned lancets, with elaborate continuous mouldings carried all round, including the sills, an unusual feature. The outer member of the arcade is carried on lofty detached shafts, divided into three sections by well-moulded bands, and with caps and bases of good design. All the detached shafts and most of the bands have fallen and disappeared. They are shown restored on Plates 9 and 13 of the "Monograph." This front was repaired in 1905-6, and want of sufficient funds prevented the renewal of the lost details. The upper stage is somewhat later in date and of different character to that just described. It has an arcade of seven members, three of which are pierced for windows. The jambs are plain, and semi-octagonal pilasters in courses with the wall take the place of the detached shafts below. The lower portions of the upper windows were originally built up. This filling in was not an insertion of modern times, like that of the other built-up windows of

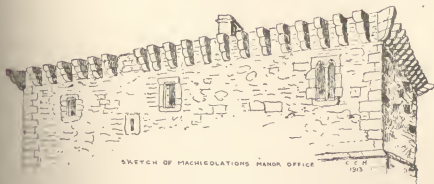
the transepts, now all re-opened, but it coursed with the walls, and was obviously intentional. It served as a parapet, so that the wall passage of the clerestory, 40 feet from the floor, could be used for defensive purposes. The buttresses flanking the elevation vary in character. Those at the north-west angle were flat pilasters, while the one in line with the main arcade of the transept is of greater bulk and projection, and is similar to those on the west side. The coping and pinnacles are partly modern. The north end of the aisle is of the same build as the fine lower stage of the front. It has a single window in the second stage with similar details to those adjoining. In the angle above, formed by the roof, is a built-up window and a single blank bay to the west of it. The angle is strengthened by two buttresses of semi-octagonal form, which rise from square plinths and terminate with long slopes to the wall, and meet a string-course with small corbels below it. In the buttress heads are curiously carved finials, very much decayed, representing fir cones.

The east side of the north transept is worthy of close examination. It has the same base course as the other sides. The aisle wall is divided into three bays. The details are those of the north end repeated. The rich mouldings of the windows are carried all round the openings. The detached shafts remain, and the work is generally in a sound state. The buttresses are peculiar, and are the same as the two at the north-east angle, having similar finials, but varying in design. The carelessness or incompetence of the builders of this transept is shown by the manner in which these buttresses are built.

The two to the south of the angle have no bond with the wall, having been built after the wall was erected, consequently they are of little use as buttresses, and the wall not only leans over considerably, but has a bulge outwards at its centre. This was prevented from further extending in 1899, when an iron tie, bedded in concrete, was hooked from the wall to the column in the church, where the dislocation was most apparent.

There is a most effective corbel table, and above it is the steeply sloped roof covered with Westmorland slates.

The clerestory is the same as that on the west side, except that the buttresses are wider and larger, and have a roll on the gabled heads. In the angle buttress there is a square-headed light to the newel stair. The parapet and roof correspond with those of the south transept.



SKETCH OF MACHICOLATIONS MANOR OFFICE

CHAPTER III.

The Interior of the Church.

SINCE the building of the nave, the usual entrance to the interior of the Priory Church is by the North doorway, in the western bay of the aisle. The view seen from the west end of the nave is one of almost unparalleled architectural beauty. Leaving the nave to be described last, as it is the most recent portion erected, the best way of examining the interior is to begin with the crypt, and the remaining portions of the first church built by St. Wilfrid between the years 672 and 678 A.D.

The Saxon Crypt.

This is an underground oratory, with subordinate chambers and passages, still existing in its entirety, with the exception of the eastern parts of two of the three passages of entrance. The crypt was uncovered in the year 1725, in digging for the foundations of the great buttress necessary to maintain the north-west pier of the tower. Hexham Crypt has often been described and illustrated. It has a counterpart at Ripon, where St. Wilfrid built a church just before that at Hexham was begun, and it is one of the six known Saxon Crypts in Britain, and the most perfect. It comprises a central chapel, or oratory, 13ft. 6in. by 7ft. 9in., and 9ft. high, which is covered by a plain barrel vault of semi-circular form. Two doorways give access to it; one from the western end of the south passage appears to have been used by the ecclesiastics alone. The other, from the ante-chapel west of the oratory

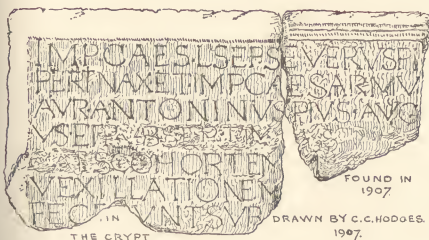


THE SAXON CRYPT, LOOKING WEST.



was for the people and pilgrims to view whatever rites and ceremonies were performed in the chapel. In the east wall is a bracket of semi-octagonal form, which apparently is a later insertion. Three lamp niches were provided to light the chapel, and are arranged so as to direct most light to the position of the altar, where there is one on either side near the east end. The third is in the west wall right upon the south-west angle. The sides of the south doorway are square, but those of the west doorway are slightly splayed to give some advantage of view to those assembled in the ante-chapel. This latter is laid out at right angles to the oratory, similarly covered with a semi-circular vault running north and south, in the crown of which is a square funnel-shaped opening for ventilation. This was until recently closed up with stones, which, on being removed, presented clear traces of soot on the sides where they had been protected by the filling stones. This deposit of soot resulted from the smoke of the burning tallow in the lamp niches escaping into the church. The fourth lamp niche is in the south wall of the ante-chapel. These rare and curious features demand special examination, and are seldom found in ancient buildings, and Hexham may lay claim to having the largest number of Saxon lamp niches in any one building in Britain. Their construction is both simple and peculiar. In the sills of the small square angled recesses are cups somewhat deeper than a semi-circle, with a rounded bottom hollowed out, and in the stone forming the head, a deeper hollow is worked of funnel shape. The lower was to hold the tallow or oil in which a wick was placed, and the other to receive, and to a

certain extent condense, the smoke from the burning wick. Rectangular vestibules are at the west ends of the north and south passages, wider and higher than the passages, having their roofs composed of large flat stones placed in an inclined position, so as to form a triangular vault. The passages themselves are roofed by flat stones of large size and great thickness; many of these have cramp holes in them. The end of one of these slabs was known to carry carving upon it, as it was once part of an elaborately ornamented cornice in a Roman building. On the opening out of the west entrance of the crypt in 1907, this stone was lifted, the carved portion taken off, and the stone replaced. The carved part is built into the south wall of the nave, where it can be seen. Two Roman inscriptions remain in the crypt. One of these is on a stone used as the head of the doorway from the north vestibule to the passage east of it. It is a portion of a large slab placed on end, with a semi-circle cut away to form the head of the doorway. The lettering is well and boldly cut, and the words APOLLO MAPONO can be read. The other, here depicted, is fixed in the east end of north passage, and is of much greater importance, as it contains an Imperial inscription. The inscribed side is placed downwards, not with the intention on the part of the builders of St. Wilfrid's day to display the letters. They used the lettering as they did the carving or tooling on the stones appropriated in their time from CORSTOPITUM, to serve as a "key" for the plaster with which all parts of the crypt were covered. Much of this plaster remains, and is a rare feature. It is composed of lime and sand, with a

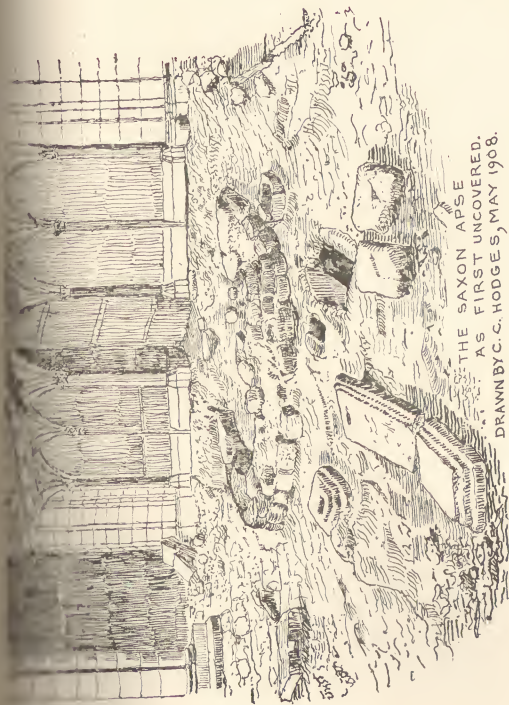


great preponderance of the latter. This composition, together with the damp atmosphere, which until the building of the nave pervaded the crypt, made it easy to remove and shell off. Consequently large areas were bared by curious persons seeking for carvings and possible further inscriptions. As there is now no opening from the crypt to the outer air, the remaining plaster has dried and is quite hard. The three passages for entrance and exit deserve careful examination. Two of these led to the tribune, or main central portion, of St. Wilfrid's basilica. These are now built up at their eastern extremities, and terminate under the western pier of the tower. Their turns and steps are shown on the plan. The western passage is now open to the nave, and gives a convenient access to the crypt. The lower steps are ancient, and have on their risers the "broached" tooling, a characteristic of Roman masonry in the North of England. A large number of "broached" stones, with varying patterns, are to be seen in the different walls, as well as numerous

portions of carved and moulded cornices, sections of fluted pilasters, and a capital carved with acanthus foliage. Several descriptions of the crypt are to be found in books published during the eighteenth century. Horsley, in his *Britannia Romana*, tells us of an inscribed altar of great importance, which is, unfortunately, lost. The gaping hole in the south wall of the north passage is probably the place where it lay on its side. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the crypt was used as a burial vault by the family of Clarke, of Hexham House. There were several interments in the oratory, where headstones were erected, but these have recently been laid flat, and the floor cemented. The crypt now opens into the nave instead of the churchyard, and its former damp and somewhat insanitary condition has disappeared.

The Saxon Apse.

The other important survival of the early church of St. Wilfrid at Hexham is its eastern termination of apsidal form. It is under the floor of the choir, immediately to the east side of the Rood Screen. The position of it, and also of its successor of the twelfth century, is clearly indicated by dotted lines on the plan. The writer and others were of the opinion that the early church extended as far as the second pair of piers from the west. Upon a memorable day in May, 1908, while the work of re-arranging the choir was in progress, and before the present floor was laid, an opportunity was given of finally testing this theory, which resulted in the Norman apse



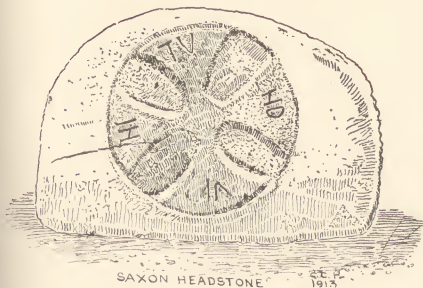
THE SAXON APSE
AS FIRST UNCOVERED.
DRAWN BY C. C. HODGES, MAY 1908.

being found east of this point, and four days later the end of St. Wilfrid's Church was uncovered west of it. This was naturally expected to be of apsidal form, but the projection from the main east wall proved more than a semi-circle, and is stilted in plan to the extent of about eight feet. The wall stands two courses high, and varies in thickness from 2ft. 2in. to 2ft. 7in. A small portion of the stone floor remains.

The architectural details of St. Wilfrid's Church, which were found during the works of 1905-8, were few and small, but still of marvellous interest, and they considerably add to our knowledge of that great structure. Most of these are built into the west wall of the nave aisle, or are in the recesses formed under the nave aisle windows.

The site of the Saxon cemetery was immediately east of the apse, and within this area many interments of an early date were found in the portion left open.

In 1911 an important Saxon head-stone was found on the site of the Saxon Cemetery. It was purchased by the late J. P. Gibson, F.S.A., who for over fifty years took a keen and abiding interest in the sacred edifice. This head-stone was given by him into the custody of the Rector and churchwardens. It is an extremely rare type of inscribed Saxon memorial stone. In Northumberland there are three at Holy Island and one at Birtley-on-Tyne. In the County of Durham a number of similar stones have been found on the site of the Saxon Nunnery at Hartlepool, and in Yorkshire two examples are in Wensley church. Another relic of St. Wilfrid's Church claims attention, viz., a stoup, or holy water stone, which



SAXON HEADSTONE
TVNDVINI.—Hodie Tundwini.

is placed in the easternmost niche of the nave aisle. A similar example is preserved in the church at Lavington, founded by St. Chad. Hexham has a great place in the history of the dawn and growth of Christianity in Northumbria. The Saxon relics at Hexham are dealt with in the volume on "Hexham and its Abbey," by C. C. Hodges and John Gibson, F.S.A.

The Choir.

The interior of the Choir has no equal in any church of the same scale in Britain, and its moderate dimensions greatly enhance the enjoyment of its rich and most beautiful details. The dates of the two apses we know from documentary evidence to a year, the Saxon, 674, and the Norman, 1153. The destruction of the records of the house in 1296 has robbed us of any reference these may,

or may not have contained of the rebuilding of the choir in the later years of the twelfth century. Definitely dated buildings at so early a period are rare. The writer can quote two examples which bear upon Hexham. The Keep of the Castle of Newcastle-upon-Tyne was erected 1172-8, and St. Joseph's Chapel at Glastonbury was built in 1184-6. A comparison of the details of either of these buildings with those of the choir, enables us to give the year 1180 as being very near that in which it was being built. A reference to the plan will show what occupied the site before the present choir was begun. In all extensions and additions made to our great churches, one object was always kept in view, viz., the continuity of the use of the building for the sacred purpose for which it existed.

In 1180 the "Transitional" period was drawing to a close, and the finished and settled form of Gothic which is termed "Early English" was approaching finality. Hexham choir is therefore a very valuable example for study, in fact it would be difficult to find a more perfect illustration in this country. The aisle walls were built first. The north aisle wall is five feet, and the south aisle wall four feet in thickness. The details of the aisles are worthy of inspection. The lower part of the wall is quite plain. A single window, deeply set, is in each bay, and has a well-moulded arch carried on detached shafts, banded once in their length, with moulded bases and capitals with the volute leaf, varied in each, the abaci and the lower member of the bases being square. The sills are stepped. The aisles are vaulted with a quadripartite vault, with well moulded transverse and



THE CHOIR, LOOKING EAST.



diagonal ribs, rising from the capitals of the piers on one side, and corbels on the wall side. The corbels vary, as all the details do in "Transitional" work, while some of the capitals are carved and others moulded. Turning to the main elevation, we see it has a full complement of rich mouldings in all its stages, but little carving, and possesses in a most marked manner that guinea stamp of a church, a triforium stage of unrivalled importance and beauty for a building of its proportions. The piers should first be examined. The bases of the isolated piers are ten in number. Those of the eastern responds have already been mentioned. Those of the western are incorporated in the two eastern piers of the crossing. Eight out of the ten are all of one pattern, the remaining two differ from the rest, and from each other, and produce three alternations in the development of the style. This led to the late J. P. Gibson and the writer to look for the east end of the first church at this point. Three hours' investigation on the site when the choir floor was taken up revealed the Norman apse. Four days later the apse of St. Wilfrid's Church was uncovered, and the whole history of the varied extensions of the choir was laid bare. The piers are of massive proportions, and have eight members of pear-shaped form with the points facing outwards. They rest on large bases, and in some cases well carved capitals. The arch mouldings are rich and varied. There are some curious differences in the piers and arches on the two sides of the choir. On the south are features which point to a survival of "Transitional" details. The hood mouldings of the main arches have the dentelle, or toothed

moulding, which is found in many churches in the Bishopric of Durham erected during the long reign of Hugh Pudsey (1153-1195), but which had gone out of use by the time the latter date was reached. The capitals on the south side are all plain, but four of these on the north are carved with very bold and beautiful "Early English" foliage, one in particular having all the trefoil leaves turned in the same direction, as though blown by a wind.

The triforium, or the blind storey, is the most interesting part of the interior of the choir, and deserves close inspection. This valuable architectural feature is found in all churches of the first class. From the descriptions of St. Wilfrid's Church, written by those who saw it, we learn that it had a triforium, and, probably, this led the canons in the thirteenth century to give great prominence to this stage. In proportion to the scale of the choir it takes a premier place amongst the triforia of the greater churches of Britain. The word triforium is of somewhat doubtful origin, but is now generally used for the stage in the wall of a church, which intervened between the main arcade and the clerestory. The vault of the aisles usually formed on its upper side a level surface between the crown of the aisle wall and that of the arches of the main arcade. The roof over the aisles in all early churches was of high pitch, and sloped from the wall of the aisle to the sill of the clerestory. On the interior of the third or vertical side of the resulting triangle was made a decorative architectural feature in most cases, by being pierced as at Hexham, and forming

an open arcade, or, built up by a wall decorated by an arcade, as at Beverley Minster and St. Mary Overy, Southwark. In the majority of early Cistercian churches this stage is a piece of plain ashlar, as at Fountains Abbey, Kirkstall Abbey, and Tintern Abbey.

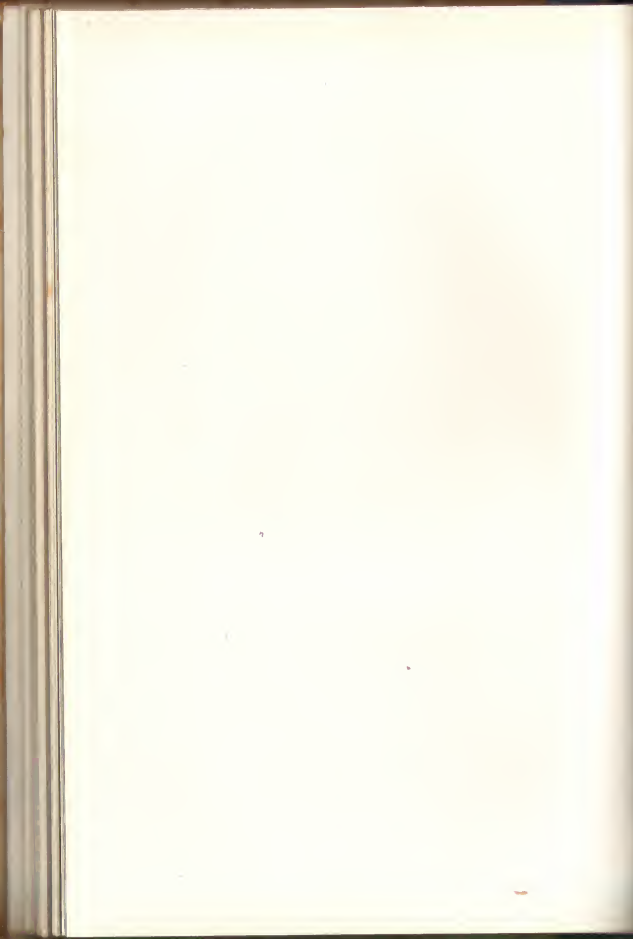
The composition of this triforium is simple but effective. A well-moulded semi-circular arch occupies each bay, and contains within it two pointed sub-arches. In each jamb are three detached shafts carrying the various orders of arch mouldings. A single shaft carries the sub-order at its centre. All the shafts have well-moulded capitals and bases. There are some curious variations and unfinished details in the jambs, which are fully described and explained in the "Monograph." The spandrils formed by the sub-division of the containing arches are pierced with quatrefoils differing from one another.

The clerestory is of more than ordinary interest, and it is of two dates, the design being changed before completion. Many of the great churches of the middle ages, not only in England, but on the Continent, were built in sections. It is owing to the close attention paid to their details, by the archaeologists of the present day, that the fact has been disclosed that these sections were not confined to the ground plots only, but extended to the elevations also. In the case of Hexham, there was a temporary roof erected over the choir at the level of the stringcourse above the triforium. The putlog holes for this roof were seen in the walls in 1908. It is clear that the intention of the designer and the builders, when this stage was reached, whatever it may have been, was not carried out, upon the

resumption of the work. The duration of the delay can only be assumed from the variation of the details. The differences which are to be seen between the two main arcades, and the two sides of the triforium disappear when the clerestory is reached, both sides being exactly alike. It is clear that the clerestory owes its peculiar construction to its having been built in two portions. An interval of some ten years may be assigned to the stoppage of the work. All lingering traces of "Transitional" influence had passed away when the upper part was built, it being of a settled and normal type of "Early English." The best parallel in the North for arriving at the dates of the various sections of Hexham Priory Church, is St. Cuthbert's, Darlington, which it is known from unquestionable documentary evidence, was begun by Bishop Hugh Pudsey in 1192, and was unfinished at the time of his death in 1195. In addition, masons' marks indicate that the same craftsmen worked at different churches within a certain area, *e.g.*, we find many of the masons' marks at Hexham repeated at Newminster Abbey, but not so far away as Byland Abbey or Beverley Minster. There are reasons for supposing that a blank arcade was intended to intervene between the triforium and the clerestory, a not uncommon feature in the churches in the north-west of France, as at Laon, Soisson, Mauzon, and Montierender. This being the case, the peculiar character of this choir clerestory, which has no exact parallel anywhere, the nearest being Romsey Abbey, is fully accounted for. One of the chief charms of Hexham is its height in proportion to its width, though



THE CHOIR, LOOKING WEST.



this height is not excessive, and would well have borne, æsthetically speaking, another ten feet or so, as it would structurally, the main walls being of the unusual and unnecessary thickness of 5ft. 3in.*

The roof of the choir is earlier than the transept roofs, and is of somewhat higher pitch, and possesses more varied details. It was no doubt erected soon after the raids of the Scots, at the close of the thirteenth and early part of the fourteenth centuries. The Prior and Convent would be anxious to repair the damage done during these raids as speedily as possible. The re-roofing of the choir would necessarily be their first consideration.†

The eastern arch of the crossing was erected at the same time as the choir, and is the only one of the four which is fully moulded, and not distorted by settlement. The bays of the choir are divided in the two upper stages by wall shafts of trefoil section. They rise from carved corbels, placed immediately below the stringcourse over the main arcades. In the triforium stage they are monoliths in two portions divided by the abacus moulding of the capitals being carried round them. In the clerestory they course with the wall, and terminate in moulded capitals close to the level of the spring of the clerestory arcade. There is no indication of a vault having been intended. A much broken string-course of the same date

* The choir is fully shown on plates 3, 8, 12, and 28 of the "Monograph."

† The roofs of the churches of St. Nicholas, Newcastle, and Hoteland are of the same design, and were undoubtedly built by the same carpenters as Hexham.

as the clerestory is to be seen in the three bays to the west. Above this is a course of stone which appears to be of the date of the present roof.

The responds at the west end of the arcade, which form one of the four sections of the tower piers, and those facing the transepts, are of peculiar form. In plan they are five sides of an octagon, and the angles are marked by a large pointed bead, which is stopped before the capital is reached.

We now pass to the crossing, *i.e.*, the area under the tower. Three of the compound piers are isolated, but the fourth is engaged, as there is no aisle on the west side of the transept or south side of the nave. The two eastern piers, and the lower part of the north and south arches, are contemporary with the choir. The two sections which rise to the tower arches are of fine bold character, and have five engaged shafts in each. They have plain chamfered bases, but well moulded capitals, the abaci of which form a large semi-circle embracing the five members. The inner order of all four arches is of the same section, but the outer orders are, in the case of the three western arches, plainly chamfered. This is one of the many instances which are to be seen in this church of an indication to economise labour as the work proceeded. In the two western piers the abacus moulding is carried round each section separately in the normal "Early English" manner. In the two eastern angles of the interior of the tower are vaulting shafts carried on corbels. These are omitted in the western angles.

The South Transept.

The South Transept is a finely proportioned and well-built piece of work, and its plainness and simplicity give it a Cistercian appearance. The pleasing effect is gained by judicious disposition of parts, coupled with carefully disposed details. There is an almost entire absence of carving, but the mouldings are particularly good. Its single aisle on the east side, and plain wall on the west give an effective variety to the two elevations. The ground storey on the east has three main arches with compound piers. The respond to the south has two large detached shafts, banded once, and boldly moulded capitals and bases. The aisle is of two bays, and is covered by a quadripartite vault with well moulded ribs. The filling in is of rubble, and it is unfortunate that the plaster which originally covered it was stripped off and the rubble pointed at the restoration of 1869. There is a broad lancet window in each bay, with moulded arches and detached shafts in the jambs. In the south wall of the aisle is a very large aumbry with square head, and a piscina with plain bowl and semi-circular head. An ancient screen, or what remained of it, is fixed in its former position, and divides this bay from the rest of the transept. The fourth bay is occupied by the slype. This passage is usually situated to the south of the main wall of the church, and the only other case of which the writer is aware of in England, where it is within the church, is St. Frideswide's or Christ Church Chapel, Oxford, now the Cathedral

church of that diocese, which, like Hexham, was a house of the Austin Canons.

This unusual position of the slype has resulted in the most picturesque feature of the whole interior, viz., the prominence given to what is termed the nightstair, which is the grandest example surviving in any monastic church in Great Britain. The observance of the different orders of regular clergy demanded their attendance in the church at various hours of the night as well as the day. The night stair led from the canons' dormitory in the eastern claustral range to the church, and was distinct from the day stair, leading from the cloister to the canons' dormitory, which was used daily. A gallery or platform, with a parapet, is over the slype, and the broad and easy stone stair, with a finely stepped parapet and moulded coping, leads from it to the floor of the church. Opening on to the landing are three doors. The largest gave access to the dormitory, and is now built up: the one in the south-west angle opens to the newel stair communicating with the upper passages and galleries; the third, to the east, opens to a curious room, with a low vaulted ceiling, which is above the internal porch of the slype. This chamber occupies the space between the platform just mentioned and the triforium. Its object and use are uncertain; possibly it was intended for the accommodation of the keeper of the Sanctuary. It is lighted by two small windows to the east, over those on either side of the doorway below. In the west wall is a locker, but there is neither fireplace nor garderobe.



THE SOUTH TRANSEPT.



The triforium stage is of three bays, one being over the slype. The three to the north have open arches with good mouldings, and are subdivided by two pointed arches, and have varied piercings in the spandrels. The northern-most bay has its main arch slightly pointed; this bay being contracted owing to its adjoining the tower. The bays are emphasised by wall shafts, which rise to the capitals of the clerestory, and stop there. A shaft in the extreme angle to the north is carried on a corbel and rises higher than the others, and is finished with a moulded capital (plate 4 in the Monograph). The south bay has the unusual arrangement of two pointed blank arches of equal size. In the northern arch is a square headed doorway, opening to the roof space, as though a chamber had been intended over the vaulted room below. There is, however, no appearance of a cross wall in the triforium to divide this bay from the others. The west side of this transept is in many ways worthy of attention. The lowest of its three stages is occupied by the slype, and the night stair, with four openings or recesses underneath, and the inside of the eastern processional doorway. The middle stage has a wall passage and four windows, between which are moulded arches on plain chamfered piers, excepting the southern, where the first design is partly carried out with richer details than in the others. This elimination was probably due to economy or greater expedition in the execution of the work. A break in the coursing of the masonry is evident both inside and outside, up to the level of the clerestory sills.

The south end of this transept merits attention, as it has been executed with masterly skill. The abutment of the dormitory and its roof precluded any openings, with the single exception of the doorway to it. Three windows were inserted above the weathering of the roof. The principal charm of this transept arises from the fact that as there is lessened illumination the architectural features are effectively displayed. The intermediate stage has an arcade of six arches, arranged in triplets, the centre one being wider and higher than the others. They are plainly but well moulded.

As in the case of the choir, there was a stoppage in the work when the triforium was built, and some years elapsed before the clerestory was added. The similarity of the general design of the clerestory, in the case of both transepts, is sufficiently marked to show that the whole was built at the same time, though, perhaps, in a leisurely manner. Such being the case, it follows that the lower stages of the north transept intervened between the erection of the lower part of the south transept, and the clerestory of both. The difference in the design and manner of building between them is very marked, and there is nothing to indicate the length of time elapsed between the erection of one portion and the other. General knowledge of actually dated examples of similar buildings and the variations of the masons' marks* are the only guides.

* This is discussed in the writer's "Monograph," pages 27, 30 and 32, the marks being given on plate 57.

The North Transept.

The two lower stages of the north transept are the most richly detailed parts of the church. A wall arcade, which is on a stone bench, is carried all round. It has a range of trefoiled arches with knots of foliage at the points of the trefoils, and carved spandrils, in which the carving has largely been cut away. The arches rest on detached shafts with moulded capitals and bases. The aisle was divided into three chapels by perpeyn walls, which carried the wall arcade across the aisle, leaving a space for communication between the outer terminations and the piers.* These perpeyn walls are now gone, and the modern patching at the points where they met the aisle wall is misleading. In one of the bays there were clear traces of painted decoration, consisting of leaves of a deep green colour and some drapery in blue. At the north end of the aisle there are three arches, two complete and one incomplete. Beyond the respond pier is another incomplete arch, and a third occurs at the southern end of the fine range along the west side. Under the north and west windows the arcade is higher than in the aisle, and the carved spandrils have changed to sunk quatrefoils. The bay which contains the small doorway to the newel stair in the north-west angle, now built up, is wider than the others, and has a semi-circular instead of a pointed head.

The junctions of the walls of the transept aisles with those of the choir will repay careful examination. In the

* In the great transept of Lincoln Cathedral, these perpeyn walls remain complete.

case of the north transept the wall was carried across that of the choir. The angle below the string course is decorated with the best piece of "dog tooth" in the church. Above the string course the angle is plain. In the south transept the angle below the string course is also plain, but above it is relieved by a hollow chamfer. In the north end of the aisle is a single window, with trefoiled head and deeply splayed. The vault of the aisle has more ornate details than the south transept aisle. The intersections of the ribs are marked by carved bosses of curious form, and the corbels on the wall from which the ribs spring are carved. One of these is the best piece of carving in the church, and is the only specimen of the Lincoln and York type of "Early English" foliage.* In the wall, between the windows, are seven inserted brackets, all of fourteenth or fifteenth century date, which carried lights or images. One of them bears Prior Leschman's monogram.†

The north end of the transept is the most ornate portion of the interior. Above the wall arcade are two stages, each containing three very long lancets, excessively stilted. The rich clusters of shafts are carried as high as the heads of the openings for the wall passages, in both the lower and clerestory levels. The lintel stones in most cases are ornamented by a well drawn sunk trefoil. The windows are placed in the outer plane of the

* This is drawn on Plate 38 of the "Monograph," and by its side is one from the choir of the Border type.

† Similar brackets are inserted into the piers of the transept at Durham, and in the fine Collegiate Church at Howden is one on which the image remains a beautiful piece of Mediæval sculpture.

thick wall (5ft. 4½ins.), and are worked with a good continuous moulding, which is not, as on the exterior, carried across the sills. The inner openings have two roll mouldings in each jamb, which rise from the lower capitals and are carried round the arches. The hood moulding is carried from window to window, and across the north-west angle, but it stops before reaching the east wall. Between the windows are triple vaulting, or wall shafts, divided into four sections by moulded bands. These are coursed with the jambs as high as the head of the wall passage, but are monoliths above. They stop at the clerestory string course, which is carried round them. At the east end of this stage is a curious arch of narrow dimensions, which springs at the level of the string course of the triforium on the east side. The mouldings which are interrupted by a capital on the east side, are continued on the west.

It may be well to describe the changes in the disposition of this front of the transept during its erection. The irregularities appear to be mainly due to changing the position of the newel stair from the line of the east wall to the north-west angle ; and also to the substitution of two or three tiers of windows in the gable wall.

The ascent to the different galleries is made by means of the newel stair in the north-west angle, which until recently had twenty-one steps to the lower gallery. These are now built up, but forty-eight more are required to reach the clerestory. The only means of access to the triforium floor is by this newel stair, which stops at the triforium, this being gained by a descent of

twenty-three steps, after an ascent of three from the upper gallery. At the fifteenth step down is a shoulder-headed doorway, which was built up after its erection, as the masonry is alike and bears the same masons' marks. It was clearly intended to lead on to a gallery in the north wall at the level of the arch of the narrow opening. On the exterior, at the same level, a capital appears in the eastern jamb instead of the moulded bands as in other places, showing where the spring of the lower window arcade was at first contemplated.* The newel stair in this angle is carried right into the pinnacle which crowns it, and two of the stones closing the well are of interest, one being a piece of stone channeling of Roman date, and the other part of an early grave cover with beaded angles.

In the uppermost stage are three long lancet windows wider than those below, and having chamfered jambs. Their inner arcade is of five members, with clusters of moulded shafts, the outer coursed with the walls, and the four inner isolated. These windows, like those below, rise no higher than the wall passage. Above are five excessively stilted arches, rising into the gable. These vary in height and width, those between the window arches being merely lofty slits. They have plain mouldings in two orders, and are continuous.

The west side of this transept displays a faultless range of lofty lancets, three in number, with blank arches between them narrower than the window arches. There is one complete triplet in the second bay from

*Plates 15 and 16 in the "Monograph."



THE NORTH TRANSEPT.



the north ; the other two having one blank arch only. The details are similar to those described in the lower range at the north end, but somewhat plainer. The wall passage terminates at the arch opening into the nave aisle. In the space between this and the clerestory are three openings, or deep recesses, with lancet heads, of no apparent use, as access to them can only be had by means of a ladder from the floor.

The clerestory in its main lines is the same as that opposite to it, but the details are changed. The isolated shafts are monoliths, moulded in front, but flat behind, and much too slight in substance for the weight they have to carry. Their bases are moulded and overhang the sub-bases, curious knots of carving appearing as brackets between them. The work of building evidently terminated at the south-west angle of this transept against the wall of the tower.

The roofs of the transepts are clearly later in date than the choir roof, and there are clear indications of the transepts having been roofless for many years. The roof on the south transept is plainer than the north. Its main braces and "jack legs" rest on stone corbels, apparently inserted some time in the seventeenth century, and it retains all its ancient bosses. The north transept roof is differently treated, as its main braces rest on oak corbels with heads and masks, above which are short shafts with caps and bases worked out of the solid. The cornice attached to the wall plates has well cut flowers in the hollow, and there are two intermediate "jack legs" to each bay. The whole of the

bosses were removed at some unknown date, and were substituted during the restoration and repair of the transepts in 1887.

The Nave.

The nave is one of the many evidences of the loving care and labour so ungrudgingly bestowed on the church by the Rev. Canon Edwin Sidney Savage, M.A.,*† the late Rector, who enlisted the sympathy and munificent support of the donor, the late Thomas Spencer, of Ryton, a loyal churchman, and a generous giver to the institutions and charities of the North of England. The late Temple Moore, of London, is responsible for the design, which is an adaptation of the "flowing decorated" style, and though of much earlier character than the remains of the nave as begun at the end of the fourteenth century, it is considered to be suitable to its surroundings.

The western arch of the crossing, of grand proportions, can now be seen from a distance of 95 feet, and the height from the floor to the ridge piece of the roof is 66 feet

Stepping from the crossing into the nave, some interesting features may be examined. One is a length of a stone step of St. Wilfrid's Church, and immediately west of this is a small area of the floor of the same building, both being precious relics *in situ*. The upper sides of

* See "Record of all works connected with Hexham Abbey" (J. Catherall & Co., Hexham), 1907.

† The works accomplished during Canon Savage's memorable incumbency are recorded on the mural tablet affixed to the west wall of the nave.

some of the covering stones of the south passage of the crypt are incorporated in this floor, above which is a portion of the stone screen, with well moulded jambs, of the time of the building of the tower. This is all that remains of the screen, with two or more doorways in it, which separated, or was meant to partition the church of the people from that of the Priory, or, in other words, the parochial nave from the conventual choir. The best local example of a screen of contemporary date is in the ruins of Tynemouth Priory. These wall screens occur in double churches, and may be studied to advantage in the great monastic churches of Croyland Abbey and St. Albans Cathedral. Coinciding with the west side of the screen wall, is a straight joint rising to a considerable height, which marks the extent of the preparation made in the thirteenth century for the building of a nave to replace that of St. Wilfrid. Immediately west of this line is the wall, built early in the fifteenth century, which formed the south wall of the then unfinished nave. The other ancient portions are the lower part of the west wall, which contains the inner arch of the west doorway. In the south jamb of this is a wall passage containing a stone stair, which led to the upper storey of the western range of the buildings which surrounded the cloister. The base of the respond of the nave arcade, plain and massive in character, has been preserved. The wall passage in the west wall of the aisle is also retained, and leads by a straight, and then by a newel stair to the upper galleries and to the roof. In the floor at the east end of the nave is laid a portion

of a grave cover, upon which the word *SECVNDVS* can be read. The contraction mark is like our modern query sign, being the mediæval for—US.

The interior of the nave consists of a lofty arcade of six bays on the north with an aisle, having its roof carried by stone arches from the piers to the outer wall. The eastern bay is smaller and lower than the others, and is carried out on the lines which appeared to be the intention of the builders of the transepts. Its eastern respond is of the thirteenth century, and is a portion of the north-west crossing pier. In the inner order of the arch is inserted an ancient arch stone, found in the great buttress of 1725, which has now been absorbed in the wall. The south side has four pairs of two-light windows in its middle stage. The clerestory is the same on either side. It has five three-light windows flanked by side arches, with traceried heads, which open to the wall passage. The roof is similar in character to the transept roofs. Inserted into the heads of the wall shafts at the two ends are four old capitals, as it was considered the best way to secure their preservation. A length of an old carved roof cornice was in a similar manner placed in front of the wall plate near the west end on the south side.

The foundation stones above the great west door of the nave are those laid on St. Peter's Day, 1907. The nave was consecrated by the Right Hon. and most Reverend the Lord Archbishop of York, Dr. Maclagan, on 8th August, 1908, and the Right Rev. G. F. Browne, D.D., Bishop of Bristol, preached the sermon.

CHAPTER IV.

*The Font, Fittings, Furniture, and
Frith Stool.*

The font bowl is undoubtedly a relic of the seventh century church at Hexham. It is of great size, with a large roll moulding near the top, and it is evident that it has been dressed to fit the stem, which is contemporary with the thirteenth century work of the Austin canons and is a short square pillar with "dog tooth" ornament at the angles. Four circular attached shafts are at the sides, and these have well moulded bases but no caps.

The cover is a re-construction carried out in 1915, from designs of the writer, and it contains some mediæval woodwork which has originally been painted and may be a portion either of the fifteenth century cover or detached fragments of the canopies of the choir stalls, which were removed in 1740. The font with its cover, as now seen in the nave, produces a pleasing effect, as the cover is of the high spire form, of which there are several examples in the north of England, viz., St. Nicholas's, St. John's, and St. Andrew's, in Newcastle; and Selby Abbey and Thirsk Parish Church, in Yorkshire.

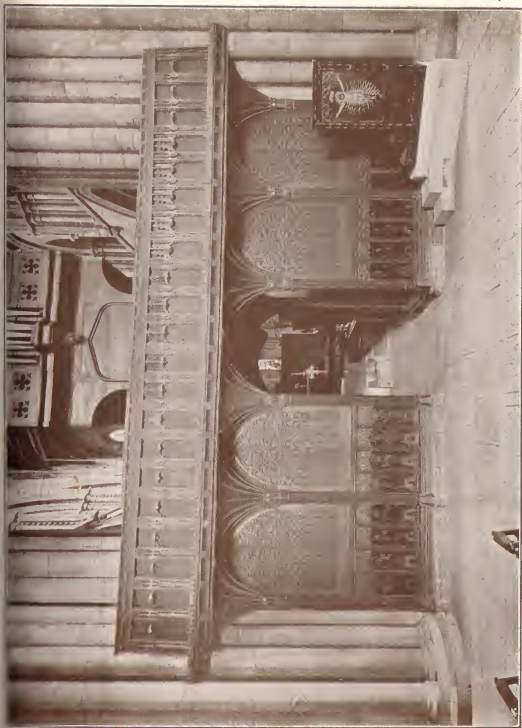
The Rood Screen and Rood Loft.

The rood screen is one of the celebrated features in the church, as it is the finest wooden solid rood screen with a loft remaining in any conventual church in England. It was erected in the time of Prior Smithson (1491-1524), the prior who carried out the great works in and about the

church, and it was richly decorated with carving, painting and gilding. The lower panels on the west side, sixteen in number, contain paintings of the bishops of Hexham, and, apparently, some of the bishops of Lindisfarne. The painted inscriptions, which record the name of each bishop and the duration of his rule, can still be read in a few instances, *e.g.*,

SCS. alcmundus reg xiii a.

The west front of the loft has twenty-one niches, which were once filled with images. There is a tradition that these were of silver, but more probably they were of gilded oak. The west side of the loft has suffered alteration and mutilation, possibly at the time of the dissolution of the priory. The canopies of the niches remain, and a few have had their gablets and pinnacles restored. There appears to have been a carved cornice, finished with a cresting, above the niches. The main beam on its western face is richly decorated with carved flowers. Beginning at the north end are four complete flowers and one half. Then follow thirteen pateræ, each bearing a combined word, the initial in capitals, and the small letters woven together, as it were, to form the words. One of these is modern. The inscription reads : ORATE PRO ANIMI DOMINI THOMÆ S PRIORI HUIUS ECCLESIA QUI FECIT HOC OPUS. Five and a half pateræ conclude the series. The five centre niches of the gallery front contain ten very delicate traceried pierced panels. These clearly do not belong to the screen, and are probably the remains of the tabernacle of the high altar. In the upper cornice is a range of pateræ smaller than those below. In the orna-



THE ROOD SCREEN, WEST SIDE.



mentations the initials of Prior Smithson appear twice over, separately on two, and combined on another. Over the doorways, which lead to the spaces under the loft, are large paintings, one representing the Annunciation, and the other the Salutation of the Blessed Virgin. The east front of the screen has been much altered. It has a *pulpitum* in its centre with good painted panels, representing St. Andrew, the patron saint, St. Etheldrida, St. Oswald and St. John, and on either side are panels elaborately painted, containing apostles, saints, archbishops and bishops. The whole of the paintings on the screen were cleaned and preserved in 1912.

The Stalls.

The thirty eight stalls which were removed in the restoration of 1858, were reinstated in 1908. They probably date from the first quarter of the fifteenth century, as there are ornaments upon them similar to those upon the Ogle Chantry (1410), and also to those upon the Choir Screen (1465-1474), which are clearly earlier than either the Sedilia or Prior Leschman's Chantry. The misericords are of no special interest. The canopies of the stalls, similar to those in Carlisle Cathedral, were cut down before 1740, to provide room for galleries in the choir, and have not been restored. The original book desks are not *in situ*, but several of the bench ends remain. Some of the former are placed in the south transept aisle.

The Sedilia.

The sedilia of five oak stalls (which formerly stood in the eastern bay), are now fixed in the second bay of the

south side of the choir. The eastern stall is larger than the other four, which are of equal size. Each stall has a panelled back and a canopy with a rich vault worked out of the solid. The divisions are of ornate character, with figures as finials, one of which carries a shield bearing three w's and a hunting horn. This may allude to Prior Woodhorn (1409-1427).

The Ancient Pulpit.

The mediæval wooden pulpit is placed in the third bay from the east on the north side of the choir arcade, where it is occasionally used. It formerly stood on the east side of the wall which blocked the western tower arch and faced east. It has fourteen rudely executed and much mutilated paintings on the panels representing Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, and the Holy Apostles. The styles between the panels are decorated with red and white spiral bands. It is probable that this pulpit may have originally belonged to the refectory. Affixed to the modern portion of the screen immediately behind the pulpit, though not belonging to it, are four panels representing scenes from the "Dance of Death." Death appears as a skeleton, visiting in turn, a cardinal, a king, an emperor and a pope.

The Choir Screen.

The ancient choir was enclosed by richly carved and decorated screens, one of which remains. It is incomplete, having been much altered and frequently moved. The earliest reference to it is a note on one of Carter's sketches (1795), which reads, "placed against the wall of the transept, and removed of late years from the east end of



"THE DANCE OF DEATH."—PAINTINGS.



the aisles of the choir." The term "late years" probably has reference to the time of the erection of the galleries (1740). Seven divisions of the screen are extant, and each consists of a richly canopied niche. Seven of the twelve bishops of Hexham are represented on these panels. Below the paintings are three sided projecting brackets, on the lower side of which the names of the bishops on the panels above are given, for example :—

Sancti Fredberti epus.

The figures are shown as if standing in alcoves, with floors of red and white lozenge shaped tiles, and walls beautifully painted, as if hung with embroidered drapery. It is most unfortunate that the tops of all the panels have been cut off, or probably there might have been seen represented the pole and rings of the hangings, as in the picture of St. Oswald, on the Rood Screen. The prelates are attired in rich mass vestments, according to dignity. St. John and St. Wilfrid wear the pall and hold the cross staff, as the mediæval tradition claimed for them the position of Metropolitan of the Northern Province. Both are vested with the alb, tunic, dalmatic, chasuble, pall, gloves, and jewelled mitre. The outer vestment of the bishops is the chasuble and cope alternately. They all wear gloves with a jewel on the back, with rings outside the gloves, even on their thumbs. The jewelled mitre is shown on each figure, but there are no indications of the *mitre*. The five bishops carry the pastoral staff, with the crook outwards, and the *nimbi* behind their heads are ornamented with varied conventional designs.

The canopies are formed of several pieces. A three-sided solid foundation has a somewhat intricate vaulting worked upon its soffit. The bosses, representing detached flowers, are fixed with oak pins. Three crocketed cusped and battlemented gablets of various sizes are fastened to the three projecting sides. Between these are pinnacles, terminating in crocketed spires. The bosses, which were fixed to the lower ends of the pinnacles, are lost. Braces rise from the foundations and form tall ogee canopies, with large and well designed crockets; the four at the top enclose a cleverly introduced finial. Seven shields are painted upon the panels above the canopies. The first space to the left is blank. The next displays a falcon, on a shield, with a plain border. Beneath the claws of the bird are three annulets of octagonal form. These may represent a fetterlock, which sometimes assumes the form of a linked chain; this shield, therefore, bears the favourite badge of Edward IV. (1461-1483)*, who was the reigning king when the screen was made. The next shield is the most important of the series, as it dates the screen to a few years. The arms are those of Archbishop George Neville (1464-1476) impaling those of the See of York, A PALL SURMOUNTED BY A CROZIER. The archbishop's arms are: QUARTERLY OF FOUR, 1 and 4, MONTACUTE QUARTERING MONTHERMER, as the archbishop's mother was a Countess of Salisbury; 2 and 3, NEVILLE, differenced with A LABEL OF THREE POINTS

* The falcon or fetterlock occur on the south side of the tower of Fishlake Church, Yorks, of the time of Edward IV., and also on the Bruce cenotaph at Guisborough, where the fetterlock is of the chain form.



THE CHOIR SCREEN.



COMPANY.* Above this shield appear the words *fundatores huius loci*, alluding, no doubt, to the bishops. On the succeeding shield are the arms of St. George, the patron saint of England. England and France, modern, appear next, followed by Percy and Lucy, quartered, after which follow the arms of Roger Thornton, a great benefactor of Hexham Priory, who died in 1429, and was buried, with his wife Agnes Wanton, in All Saints' Church, New-castle, where their splendid brass, one of the grandest in England, is preserved. Lastly come the arms of the Priory.

The Harclose Screen in South Transept.

A screen of the late Gothic date, which divided the chapels, remained in the aisle of the south transept as late as 1860, when it was removed to form part of the vestry partition. It was, happily, replaced in its original position during the alterations of 1908, and not restored.

There were residents in Hexham in 1858 who bought carved oak work from the Priory church for five shillings a cart load, which indicates the small value placed at so recent a period on the priceless woodwork of the Austin Canons.

The Ancient Alms Box.

The alms box is clearly of mediæval workmanship, and in Carter's plan it is shown as fixed to the end of the book board on the south side of the Rood Screen. It is now in the Vestry. This box, which was cut out of the top of an

* The more beautiful of the coats of arms connected with Hexham are emblazoned on the coloured title to the "Monograph."

oaken post, has an iron lid with good hinges, terminating in *fleur de lys*, and is plated with iron for protection. There are two locks, and a slit in the lid.

The Old Communion Table.

The old communion table remained in the church until 1858. It had massive carved oak legs, some of which were found on a rockery twenty years later. The Elizabethan communion rails, which had fine twisted balusters, were sold, and are now placed in the parish church at Bramley, Hants.

The Organ.

The organ is a fine instrument re-constructed by Messrs. Norman & Beard, of Norwich.

The Frith Stool.

Prior Richard relates that St. Wilfrid gained the great privilege of sanctuary for his Cathedral church at Hexham, and consequently the frith stool, or seat of sanctuary, was placed within its chancel. The area of sanctuary extended for a mile in every direction around the church, and it should be remembered that in the seventh century a mile was equal to a mile and a half to-day. Stone crosses were set up at the four cardinal points of the compass to define the area of sanctuary. The socket stone of one of these crosses was removed from the "White Cross" field, east of Hexham, and is still preserved in the Workhouse. Two other bases of crosses, situated at Lady Cross Bank and Homer's Lane respectively, are probably not in their



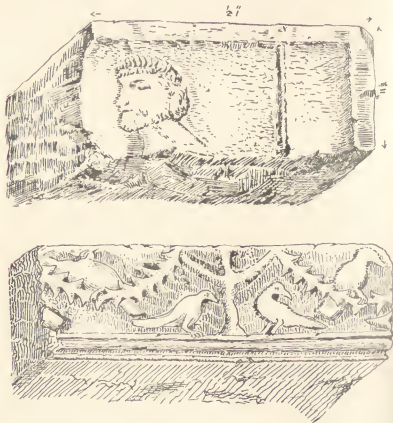
THE FRITH STOOL.



original position. Any person who arrested a fugitive within the sanctuary boundaries, was liable to pay a fine to the church. The fines increased in amount the nearer the arrest was made to the choir of the church, but the arrest of a fugitive, if seated in the seat of sanctuary, was not redeemable by any fine. The ancient stone seat, known as the Frid-Stool, or Frith Stool is no doubt the veritable bishop's seat, the cathedra of the early church. It was probably placed in the centre of the hemicycle of the apse of St. Wilfrid's Cathedral church of St. Andrew. Prior Richard (1142-1174) says : "It stood against the altar." This seat is cut from a single block of stone, and the earliest drawings show it mounted upon another stone with a moulding of mediæval character intervening. Its first recorded position in the present church was in front of the first pier from the east on the north side of the choir. In 1830, it was moved to the north side of the same pier, *i.e.*, into the north aisle, and it is quite probable that it was broken then, and the mediæval base was lost. In 1859 the stool was placed in the south transept. In 1872 it was again removed to the first position as far as the present church is concerned, but in 1885 it was placed against the east wall of the choir, on the south side of the altar. In 1908 it was placed at the north side of the altar, and in 1910 was removed to its present position east of the rood screen. The marble chair of St. Ambrose, at Milan, has similar ornament to that worked on the top of the arms of the frith stool, and is supposed to have been modelled from the stone chairs in the early churches at Rome and Ravenna. The mouldings in front and parts of

the sides of the Hexham chair appear to indicate that it was probably covered at the back and sides as if it had been placed in the centre of a range of stone seats within the apse. The only other frith stool in England is at Beverley Minster, and it is quite plain, and apparently of later date, than the Hexham chair. Both these chairs were used as seats of Sanctuary all through the middle ages, until Sanctuary was curtailed at the time of Henry VIII and finally fell into disuetude at the time of James I.

ROMAN STONES IN THE NAVE SOUTH WALL,



CHAPTER V.

Roman, Anglo-Saxon, and Mediæval Memorials.

The Memorial to Roman Standard Bearer.

THE earliest memorial in order of date stands in a recess in the west wall of the south transept, caused by the building up of the eastern processional doorway of the cloister. It is a great Roman funeral monument, a huge monolith standing 8 feet 8½ inches in height, the largest of its class found in England. It records the death of a young standard-bearer who perished at the early age of twenty-five at CORSTOPITUM, and upon a sunk panel with ansated ends there appears the following inscription :—

DIS MANIBVS FLAVINVS
EQ ALAE PETR SIGNIFER
TVR CANDIDI AN XXV
STIP VII H S

The translation is as follows :—

“To the gods the shades, Flavinus of the cavalry regiment Petriana, standard-bearer of the troop of Candidus, twenty-five years of age and seven years service, is laid here.”

Above the panel bearing the inscription, is the figure of a mounted Roman soldier riding over a prostrate foe. The young officer is well armed, and wears a helmet with crest and plume, and a torque is round his neck, which indicates his high rank. In his right hand he carries the standard which displays the sun god in a circle, and his long sword is sheathed. The harness and trappings of his horse are

clearly shown. The naked Briton appears as if crouching on the ground, and his right hand grasps a short leaf-shaped sword.*

Anglo-Saxon Memorials.

Some of the finest known examples of Anglo-Saxon art have been found at Hexham. The influence of the Hexham school of art from its beginning in the seventh century, extended over an area far beyond the confines of the diocese of Hexham. This type of sculpture, which held the premier place among pre-conquest work, was the result of the introduction by St. Wilfrid of craftsmen from ecclesiastical Italy and France. Bishop G. F. Browne,† speaking of St. Wilfrid, says :—"If the best could not be produced at home, he must bring it from abroad, for the best he would have. He clearly had already collected a band of workmen, skilled to carry out anything which Italy and France suggested to him, as in accordance with the highest tone of church art."

The earliest recorded interment at Hexham took place in 740, when St. Acca, the chaplain, friend and successor of St. Wilfrid, was buried at the east end of the great basilica. The memory of Bishop Acca is venerated in Scotland to this day, as he is reputed to have brought the relics of the apostle, St. Andrew, to Saint Andrew's, in Fife. The Venerable Bede speaks of him as "The dearest

* A full description of Roman, Saxon and Mediæval memorials and other architectural details appears in "Hexham and its Abbey," by Charles Clement Hodges and John Gibson, F.S.A., published by Gibson & Son, Hexham, and B. T. Batsford, London, 1919.

† See Rede Memorial Lecture, Cambridge University Press, 1910



THE ROMAN STANDARD BEARER.



and most loving of prelates that live on the earth.”*
 “Acca did great things for Hexham, for he knew Wilfrid’s affection for that place, and he loved it himself. He inherited also his master’s tastes and had opportunities for indulging them that Wilfrid never enjoyed. What would he not have given for these long years of peace which fell to Acca’s lot? Wilfrid made the sketch and coloured the more prominent features in the picture, but Acca put in the more delicate touches and completed what his master had begun, for he was a person of a most refined mind. It was he who added to the monastery, erected altars within its walls in honour of the relics of the saints, that he had acquired; and gave vessels and lights to the decoration of the church. Activity seems to have been observable in everything that he did; and he put into practice in England many of the rules and practices that he learnt in Italy. He was also a great singer, and brought to Hexham and kept there for twelve years a musician of the name of Maban, who had acquired his art in Kent from those masters of song whom Gregory had sent over. The well known tones, therefore, for which this great pope is renowned, would not be strange to the inhabitants of Tynedale. Upon Acca also, devolved the charge of completing the three churches dedicated to SS. Mary, Peter, and Michael which his predecessor had begun.”†

Symeon, of Durham, writing in the twelfth century, says: “his body was buried beyond the wall to the east of the

* ‘Life of St. Wilfrid,’ by A. Streeter.

† See Raine’s “Priory of Hexham,” Vol. I. Surtees Society, 1864.

church of Hagustald (to-day Hexham),* over which, for twenty-four years, he exercised pontifical authority, and two stone crosses, ornamented with wonderful carving, are placed, one at his head, another at his feet. On one of them, that which is at his head, is an inscription stating that he is buried at that place." The main portion of St. Acca's memorial cross is set up in the Cathedral Library, Durham,† where there can be seen other noted examples of Anglo-Saxon art from Hexham, and many other places. A replica of St. Acca's cross, designed by the writer, was erected in 1894 at Hexham cemetery, by public subscription, to the memory of the late Isaac Baty. Many fragments of Anglo-Saxon work can still be seen at Hexham; portions of shafts covered with interlaced work, also heads of crosses. These are fragmentary remains of the upright crosses which were usually placed at the head of the graves of persons of importance, from the seventh century onwards until the time of the Norman Conquest. Most of these crosses—or rather what survives of them—are in the recesses of the nave aisle wall.

In addition to these remains of crosses, there are two complete Anglo-Saxon grave covers at Hexham, in the north and south aisles of the choir of the church. The first has long been in the church, but there is no record of when or where it was found. It bears an incised cross of

* All through the Middle Ages Hexham was known as Hextoldesham or Hextildesham, and the modern name of the town is a contraction.

† A full account of these is given in "A Catalogue of the Sculptured and Inscribed Stones in the Cathedral Library," by F. J. Haverfield, M.A., F.S.A., and William Greenwell, M.A., F.R.S., F.S.A.—Thos. Caldcleugh, Sadler Street, Durham, 1899.

Anglian form. The other cover was found immediately south east of the vestiges of the Saxon apse in May, 1908. It is boat-shaped, and has a raised cross upon it, with the foot of the stem of the primitive form, and is a most valuable example of the earliest type of ornamented grave cover of the Christian era. It is probably the cover of the stone coffin which was found lying close to it. Hexham possesses two of the ~~three~~ examples of Anglo-Saxon or Pre-Conquest "hog-backed" grave-covers in the County of Northumberland. One of these was found in 1831, when digging a grave within the north transept, and it can be seen in the seventh recess from the west end of the nave aisle. The other, in the fifth recess, was discovered by the writer on 18th April, 1907. It is probably eighth century work, and was placed in the heart of the old south wall of the nave, close to and nearly above the western processional doorway of the cloister. This latter grave-cover has, unfortunately, the ends broken off, but the top displays two designs, one a three-cord plait, the other a chain with each link embracing two others.

Mediæval Memorials.

The fine altar tomb, built in between the south column of the north transept, and close to the angle of the choir and north transept, is the finest sepulchral monument of the first class in the church. Tradition assigns this tomb to Elfwald, a king of Northumbria, who was murdered in the vicinity of the Roman Wall, near Hexham, in 788, and was buried in the church. The date of this tomb is

about 1290, and it is probable that the Austin Canons, in their halcyon days, desired to commemorate Elfwald by erecting this cenotaph.

The earliest sculptured effigy in the priory church is that of a civilian. Unfortunately it is much decayed, and there is no indication of either degree or sex. It was for many years used as a headstone in the churchyard, until it was brought inside the building during the incumbency of the late Canon Barker. The probable date of this effigy, which now lies in the north aisle of the choir, is towards the close of the thirteenth century.

The next in order of date commemorates a lady, and is now in the south side of the choir. It is well sculptured out of hard, close grained, but not local stone. She is shown wearing the long loose robe, tight sleeves and wimple of the latter part of the reign of Edward I. Her head rests on a large square cushion, but the figure of the animal on which her feet rested, is missing.

The earlier of the two knightly effigies, now beside Elfwald's tomb in the north choir aisle, has been assigned to one of the Boltbys, who at one time owned Langley Castle, near Haydon Bridge. Other writers consider that it may represent Sir Thomas de Devilstone, who granted the manor of North Milburn to Hexham Priory, and who died in 1297. He is represented as clad in chain mail, over which is a sleeveless surcoat. His sword hangs by a strap to his belt, but is almost entirely broken away. A shield bearing his arms, suspended by a guide (extra strap) over his right shoulder, is carried on his left arm. His feet rest against a lion, and against the right foot, which is

thrown over the left, is the figure of an angel in supplication. The other knightly figure, in the second bay from the east of the south aisle of the choir, is undoubtedly that of Gilbert de Umfreville, who died in 1307. His costume is similar to that on the lastly described effigy, but the execution of the work is superior. He wears a suit of link mail, which has a loose surcoat over it. His sword, with large pommel, hangs from a plain belt, and the shield is carried in relief, with a beautifully drawn cinquefoil, round which are eight crosses *patonce* (the arms of Umfreville). The slab on which the effigy lies is ornamented with the "ball flower," and small figures of animals supposed to allude to the Umfreville's office of exterminating the wolves and foxes in the valley of the river Rede.

The Ogle Chantry.

The earlier of the two chantry chapels remaining in the church was erected to perpetuate the memory of Sir Robert Ogle, who died in 1410. It was moved out of the choir at the "restoration" of 1858, but it has been carefully replaced and the necessary modern work added, as far as possible, to complete the original. Above the altar of this chantry was a beautiful triptych: the centre panel depicting Our Lord rising from the tomb, the left panel the Blessed Virgin, and the right panel St. John the apostle. This triptych is now in private possession. The major portion of the chantry, which was decorated with the crescent of the Ogle family, was composed of oak, gilded and painted. The matrix and some slight remains

of the brass are contained in a large limestone slab, laid in the floor immediately to the north of this chantry.

Prior Rowland Leschman's Chantry.

This famous shrine, and relic of mediæval piety, was for a long time erroneously ascribed to Prior Richard, the historian of Hexham, who died towards the close of the twelfth century. It is, however, quite certain that it was erected to perpetuate the memory of Prior Leschman (1480-1491), and his altar tomb, which displays his rebus on a shield, supports his recumbent effigy. It is now placed in the second bay from the east, of the choir north arcade, where it stood prior to the restoration of 1858, as shown upon old plans still in existence. This shrine rises from a stone basement of carved slabs, reaching across the bay of the arcade. The slabs, on the north side, are covered with sculptures, uncouth and coarse, revealing the vulgar taste of the period. St. George is depicted killing the dragon, the fox is seen preaching to the geese, the harper plays his harp, and the piper his bagpipes.

The south side contains an arcade of flowing tracery interspaced with a line of crudely carved heads of varying design. The position of the doorway is at the west end of this arcade. The posts of the door were originally let into grooves in the stonework. The curious and isolated figure standing by this shrine is that of St. Christopher with his traditional tree. The figure of the Infant Jesus has gone. This figure of St. Christopher has been a lintel of the doorway, judging by the grooves worked upon it. The bands round the ankle are an unusual feature. They are



shown in somewhat similar manner on a sculptured figure of a pilgrim in Lincoln Cathedral. The stonework of this chantry terminates with a battlement, above which an open oak lattice encloses the north and south sides. This carved woodwork is by far the most delicate and refined in the church, being in marked contrast with the coarse and crude character of the masonry. The east end is filled with panelling. Three vertical panels above and

one horizontal panel below constituted the reredos of this chantry. The upper panels contain large unrestored paintings, representing the Holy Apostles St. Peter, St. Andrew and St. Paul, and the large lower panel depicts Our Lord rising from the tomb, and the Instruments of the Passion, together with the prior kneeling at one side. The stone altar is immediately below this reredos, and its five consecration crosses still remain. The solid altar basement has inserted in it an aumbry, the jambs of which display grotesque carvings on either side. The wooden ceiling is boarded and flat, but incomplete. It was divided into ten squares with moulded ribs, and at the points of intersection were elaborately carved bosses, a row being along the centre, half-bosses at the sides, and quarters in each angle. Few of the centre bosses remain, but among those which disappeared in 1858 was a singularly striking one showing an angel holding a shield, bearing the rebus of Prior Rowland Leschman (1480-1491). Within this chantry, near the west end, stands the altar tomb, bearing on its south face a shield with his monogram. The effigy of the prior rests upon the original tomb, and he is shown habited in the dress of the Austin Canons. The upper portion of his face is hidden by the hood of his cloak, as was the custom after death,* and his head rests on a square cushion with tassels at the angles. His hands are clasped, and on his feet are wide-toed boots. The frequent occurrence of Prior Leschman's monogram shows that he was in the habit of leaving his mark upon his work.

* The remaining end of the Bruce tomb at Guisborough Abbey gives a good example of the dress of the Austins Canons in life, with the hoods of the cloaks thrown back.

Seven of these monograms remain, six in the church and one on a doorway head originally in the prior's house. A grave stone, with a cross with *fleur-de-lys* terminations, a mason's square and hammer, and the letters **r l**, was at one time in the church. From this we may assume that Leschman was a Hexham man,[†] who conceived the idea of the rebus, which combines the prior's initials and the arms of the priory.[‡]

Two other monuments deserve attention ; the first, now in the second recess east of the north door of the nave, is a grave-cover of the coped form. It commemorated a twelfth century child, and is inscribed PVER JVRDANVS, and was found in the cloister about the year 1800. The second, in the north aisle of the choir, is a portion of the type of grave-cover representing the *domus ultima*, man's last house, and was placed on the top of a grave. On the sides of it are worked semicircular tiles, and two words of the inscription, EMI and SENT are legible.

In the aisle of the south transept there is a good example of the type of coped grave cover, which has a chalice incised on the top near the head. It was discovered in March, 1907, in its original position, eight feet below the surface of the churchyard at that time. In the head of the wall passage at the west end of the nave, some grave covers are built in, in the same manner as they are incorporated in the western range of claustral buildings. The burial ground of the Austin Canons was on the south

[†] There are still people in Hexham of the name of Lishman. *Lesch* means in local parlance, *lithe*, *agile*.—"Heslop's Northumberland Words."

[‡] "Surtees' Society," Vol. XLIV., P. CLXXIV.

side of the choir, and in 1830 a most remarkable and valuable discovery was made, by the uncovering of a group of grave-covers, the majority of which were complete. The broken and imperfect examples were subsequently utilised in the repair of the fabric, but the more perfect specimens are preserved in the slype and the choir. The principal inscriptions are as follows :—

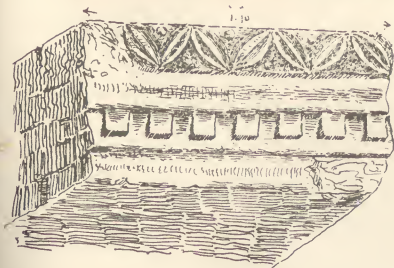
: HIC : JACET : RAD?DE : TALKAN : CANOIC :
 + ROBERTUS : DE : BEDELINT : *i.e.*, Bedlington
 + FR' NICHOLAVS : *i.e.*, Brother Nicholas.
 + ROBERT ? : DE : GISEBVRNE +
 + WILLELMVS : BEDET × × × ×
 + ANICE : DE : WEL × × ×
 + IOHES : DE : DALTONA :
 + ROBERT : DE : KIRKEBRIDE +
 + HENRICVS : DE : WALTONA +

The parochial churchyard was situated to the north of the church at Hexham, and a fine memorial cover was unearthed in 1841, to the north of the present nave. It has good moulding on its edges, and bears the following well cut inscription :—

+ HIC : JACET : MATILDA : VXOR : HILIPPI :
 MERCERARII : followed by a pair of shears.

Hexham possesses a large number of the ornamental class of mediæval grave-covers with symbols and no inscriptions. One of these bears shears only, another a sword, and a third in the slype, shows a hammer and a horse-shoe, which indicates the calling of the deceased.

There are five complete specimens of great stone coffins, some of which have a circular cavity for the head cut out of the solid block of sandstone. The fall of the outer face of the wall of the south transept front in 1878, broke up a number of these relics, which were then lying in the vestibule of the chapter house, and the fragments were cleared away with the debris at that time.



Roman Stones in the North Passage of the Crypt.

The Conventual Buildings.

THE ground plot of a house of regular clergy had its origin in the atrium, or open court, of the Roman basilica. Monastic houses were built for entirely religious and contemplative purposes. The monks, or canons regular, lived under a rule which forbade them to leave the precincts, unless under necessity. The cloister was to them an outdoor study. Their days when not in church, dormitory, or refectory, were spent in pacing its alleys in silence. The conventual buildings of the cloister had but little variation in monastic houses, excepting that the cloister was sometimes to the north of the church. The south was invariably the favourite side, as the nave of the church formed a welcome shelter on the north. Hexham was one of the favoured houses which had an ample water supply, and its plan is neither dominated or contracted by the site. The original cloister was planned by St. Wilfrid on the south side of his great basilica, and Prior Richard says he brought water to it in an aqueduct of stone. The cloister of the Austin Canons measured 107 feet north and south, and 98 feet east and west. The angles were not rectangles, because the sides varied in length.

The order of building the different ranges of apartments around the cloister was to erect the east first, the south next, and last of all the west, and this procedure was followed at Hexham. In the first quarter of the thirteenth century, when the east range was built, St. Wilfrid's nave

was standing. The foundations of both the east and west walls of the eastern range of the claustral buildings of his time have since been uncovered and verified.

The Slype.

The slype of the Augustinian Priory at Hexham is inside the church. It formed a passage by which access was gained to the cloister garth from the eastern precincts, where the infirmary was placed, and the canons' cemetery situate. After the death of the canon in the infirmary, the body was carried into the infirmary chapel, from which on the following morning it was taken into the chapter house. In the chapter house the dirges and devotions were said, after which the body was taken through the slype and laid to rest in the cemetery. The doorways at the east and west ends of the slype are ancient, but the doorway leading into the south transept is modern. The eastern part of the slype is wider than the other, from which it is divided by an arch and thick wall, which continues the main arcade of the south transept. The whole of the slype is vaulted, and above the eastern portion is a small room, which has been termed the "Sanctuary chamber."

The Chapter House and its Vestibule.

The chapter house and its vestibule were immediately south of the slype, and it is regrettable that their remains are so scanty, as they were of excellent design and ample proportions. The chapter house itself is gone, but it is possible to restore in imagination all its details, excepting the windows, which would doubtless be single lancets at

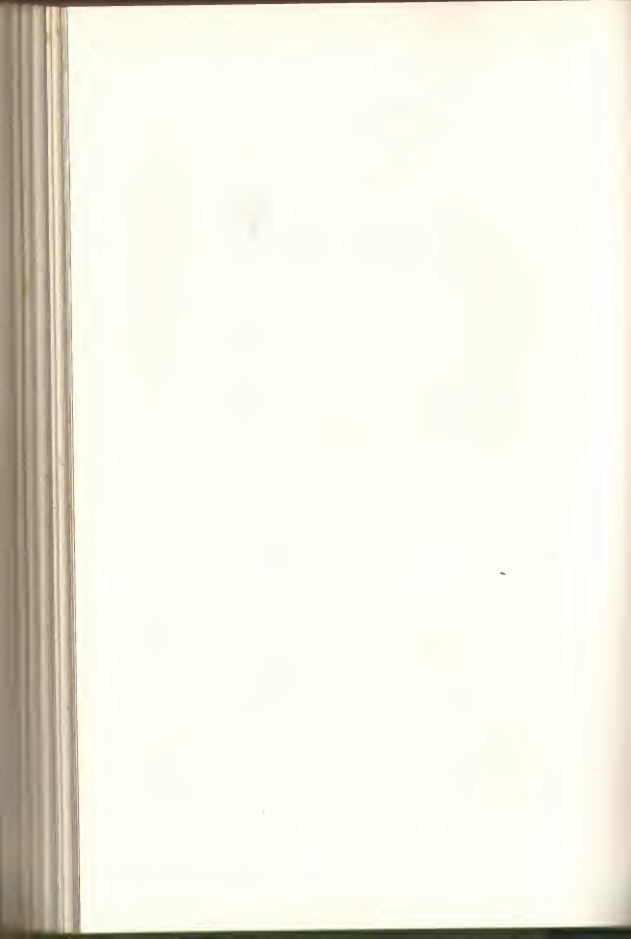
the sides, with a group of lancets lighting the eastern end. The chapter house had a bench table and wall arcade, and it was vaulted at a much higher level than the vestibule, as it stood clear of the dormitory and calefactory. Its internal height was about thirty-five feet.

The wall between the chapter house and the vestibule is pierced by a doorway, and on either side of it are open arches. The wall arcade is skilfully carried over these openings, as shown on plate 56 of the "Monograph."

The vestibule was nearly a square, and contained nine vaulted compartments. When Hutchinson wrote his account in 1773, the four columns which divided it into three alleys were then standing, and he describes them as of "Ionic form," meaning that they were plainly moulded. The column bases were visible many years after, but have now disappeared. The west doorway of the chapter house vestibule, opening into the east alley of the cloister, was by far the most beautiful feature of the priory buildings, and was in existence in 1819. It is described in one of the note books of the late Joseph Fairless, of Hexham:—"The beautiful doorway into the chapter house from the cloisters was blown down in a thunderstorm. A hand at the top seemed to hold vine fruit and foliage descending both sides of the arch, and terminating with two lizards at the bottom." The doorway is shown on one of Grimm's drawings, 1778. A fragment of the carved work is in the recess on the north side of the choir. The remains of this doorway are slight, but it is clear that the arch was carried on coupled shafts in the jambs, and the inner moulding was decorated with the "dog-tooth" ornament.



THE CHAPTER HOUSE VESTIBULE.



The Calefactory.

The calefactory, or day-room of the canons, was the apartment east of the vestibule, and was known as the common room, or warming house, as the prior and convent kept a fire there, and such light labours as the greasing of sandals and the preparation of parchment were performed within it. It contained the oven for baking the altar breads, and the sacristan lighted the censers at the fire. The calefactory, which was five bays in length, was vaulted in a plainer manner than the vestibule to the chapter house, and only the northern respond of pointed form, and some of the corbels on the west wall, remain to show its form. In the north-west angle are remains of what may have been the oven. The fireplace was in the centre of the west wall, and its arch is built up.

The Dormitory of the Canons.

The dormitory of the canons was over the vestibule and the calefactory, but nothing now remains excepting the inner part of the built-up doorway, which communicated with the church. Some part of the steep-roof survived until the nineteenth century, and the weathering remained until the fall of the wall face of the front of the south transept in 1871.

The Refectory or Frater.

The south side of the cloister was occupied by the refectory or dining hall of the canons, which was both large and beautiful, being over one hundred feet in length, and twenty-eight feet in width, and of proportionate height.

Its loss is grievous, as it must have been amongst the finest buildings of its class in this country. The existing remains are confined to the lower part of its west wall, embedded in the Abbey House, and a small portion of the north wall, which carries the western jamb of its doorway. The survival of this jamb is most fortunate, as by its details it gives some idea of the character of the whole building. The level of the doorway was about seven feet above the cloister level, and was reached by a flight of stone steps. The spring of the doorway arch existed when Grimm made his sketch in 1778, and shows that the arch mouldings were decorated with carving. Fragments of window tracery, found in 1908, proved that the windows were of great size and beauty, with four lights with circles in the heads. A wall arcade was carried along the north side, having detached shafts, moulded bases, and carved capitals. The refectory had an undercroft, partly below, but mainly above ground. It was vaulted in two alleys, the pillars—one was standing in 1795—were of octofoil form. On the wall side, the vault sprang from corbels of good design. One of these, with the vaulting springer, remains in the angle just within the jamb of the refectory doorway. The undercroft appears to have been seven bays long, and at its eastern end a passage intervened between it and the calefactory.

The Lavatory.

The lavatory adjoins the refectory doorway, as it was the rule for the monks or canons to wash before entering the refectory for meals. The trough, or basins, of the

lavatory have gone. One of Carter's sketches indicates that the lavatory consisted of two or more semi-circular basins. The wall arcade remains almost entire, and would have been almost perfect but for the two unfortunate fires at the Abbey House. So elaborate an erection of the date of the Hexham example (c. 1280) is quite exceptional, but it is closely rivalled by the remains of the lavatory at Kirkham Abbey, which, although of similar date, are very different in design. There is one fragment of the cloister at Hexham which indicates the form of its inner arcade.* It clearly had a tee-fall roof, and the earlier part of the arcade on the north and east alleys may have been of wood. The south and east alleys, however, must have been of superior character, and some of the carved capitals, many of which were double, and of the same date as the lavatory, came from its arcades.† The cloister of Lincoln Cathedral was in course of erection in 1296, the year of the burning of Hexham Priory, so it may be advantageously studied.

The Western Range.

The buildings on the west side of a conventual cloister were by no means the least important, as these were under the control of the cellarer, one of the chief officials of the house, whose duties were of much the same nature as those of the bursar in a college to-day. The lower part of this range is left unchanged. It is divided into four sections in its length. These are all vaulted with well

* A base of two shafts of the cloister arcade is built into a brick wall in Hexham House garden and is the only fragment existing.

† The writer saw several of these on a rockery many years ago.

formed barrel vaults, on square, chamfered, or moulded ribs. The section at the south end of the range has its floor at the level of the cloister, and contains one original window, and another enlarged in recent years. This apartment was used as a store place, as its door at the south end, now built up, led to the site of the kitchen, of which there are no remains. The apartment is not nearly so wide as the building, as a passage, now built up, intervenes between it and the lavatory. This seems to have contained a straight stair leading to the upper floor.

The next section is a passage with three doorways, one to the cloister, now opened; one to the garden on the site of the outer, or Prior's Court; and the other to the north, to the largest apartment in the range. The vault of this passage has been changed at its western end from a cross vault to one of barrel form. The door at its west side is original. This, and two doors on the landing of the night stair, are the only original doors left. The next section is of greater height than the others, as its floor is three steps below the level of the cloister. Its vault is a complete semi-circle on the soffit of the ribs. It was probably used for workshops, as there are no openings towards the cloister, the east wall being of the enormous thickness of more than nine feet. On its west side are three windows, of fair size, now all built up. Near its centre an opening in the vault contains the remains of a stone stair, of which four steps remain, the remainder being built up. The only means of gaining this stair would be by a ladder from the floor. The windows seem

to have been built up when the Prior's house was enlarged in Leschman's time. In the small court on the west side, which was formed in 1539, is a buttress near the steps mentioned above. This has a good wide chamfer with two curious stops, shown on plate 55 of the "Monograph."

At the north end of the range is a passage, which led from the cloister garth to the Prior's house. This has a barrel vault with moulded ribs, and of better finish than the other parts. The doorways at either end are built up, and the only entrance to it is by a large shoulder-headed doorway leading to the main section of the range. The door to the cloisters appears in Grimm's sketch of 1778, and disappeared at the time of the refacing of wall after the fire of 1818. This chamber is quite dark, and was used as a wine cellar of the Abbey House when occupied by the Lord of the Manor.

The upper floor of the western range, which formed the dormitory of the lay brethren, was considerably altered in Prior Leschman's time. It had a lofty gable to the north, crowned with a pinnacle rising from a carved band. The heads of the two windows are both to be seen in the church, and the base of the pinnacle is in the choir. The gable is shown in Buck's and Carter's sketches ("Monograph," plate 6).

The Prior's House.

In Prior Leschman's time, the prior's house was considerably altered, and until the two disastrous fires already alluded to, occurred, much of his work remained. The main wing on the north, extended much further to the

west than at present. In it was a handsome gateway, carried up both inside and outside as a battlemented tower, and having on the north a machicolated turret projecting from the battlemented parapet, which rising above it, was carried on triple corbels. The Prior's house is shown on Buck's and Carter's sketches, 1728 and 1795, which show that the parapet had disappeared before the later date. The other buildings round the Prior's court were of a domestic or agricultural nature. The barn, which occupied the west side, and completed the court, was burned in 1818.

In 1539 Sir Reginald Carnaby erected a block of buildings in the angle formed by the western range and the Prior's house. His arms, with the date, are on the north front, and some of the original windows, strongly protected by iron bars, still survive.

The Precinct Wall.

A large area was enclosed by the precinct wall, and it is fortunate that enough masonry remained when the ordnance survey was made in 1860, to define its extent with comparative certainty. Some portions standing at that time have been removed, but there are still traces of it to be seen. The gateway and the precinct wall were among the first great works undertaken by the Austin Canons after settling in Hexham. The gatehouse probably dates from the middle of the twelfth century. The building of the precinct wall would naturally be undertaken at the same period.

The only historical reference to this wall is contained in a deed of Archbishop Zouche, dated at Cawood, 28th May, 1350, allowing the canons to extend a portion of it five feet outwards in length from the chapel of the Blessed Mary, situated in the Market Place, to the gatehouse of the Priory. This was when the eastern choir aisle, erroneously termed the Lady Chapel, attached to the priory church, had been, or was about to be, built.

A piece of the precinct wall, four feet in thickness, remains on the west side of the gatehouse, and another forms a boundary of Messrs Bell's tannery. A valuable fragment was in the yard of the Grapes Inn, which showed that St. Mary's Chapel lay outside the precinct wall to the east. A long stretch of 386 feet was standing in 1860, between Beaumont Street and St. Mary's Chare, but only a small portion remains.

The mediæval bridge over the Halgut burn can still be seen from the garden of Hexham House. It is a good example of the pointed arched bridge of the thirteenth century. The single arch is borne on four chamfered ribs, on corbels. The bridge carried the road over the burn to the Sele.

The Priory Gatehouse.

At Hexham the priory gatehouse stands to the north-west of the church, and is a valuable and early example of a monastic gatehouse. It is to be regretted that it has not survived in its entirety.

Its lower, or ground storey, is all that remains of the

gateway, and the existence of an upper storey can only be inferred from the fact that it is usually found in all the larger monastic gatehouses, of which many grand examples remain, some in a perfect state, as at St. Albans Cathedral, Bridlington Priory, and Carlisle Cathedral. It consisted of an inner and an outer hall, divided by a wall which contained two openings, one much wider than the other. The larger was covered by a semi-circular arch, and was closed by a pair of massive gates. The crooks on which the hinges turned are still in the surviving jamb on the east side. The smaller opening was covered by a low segmental arch, and contained the postern for foot passengers. At either end of the passage way are large open semi-circular arches. There are buttresses at each angle, which die into the walls by plain slopes near the level of the crown of the vault, and on either side buttresses strengthen the walls between the angles. Between the two on the west side was the porter's lodge, opening into the inner hall by a doorway with an obtusely pointed arch. The vaulting of the outer hall is in one bay, that of the inner hall in two bays.

Carter's sketches, and an engraving in "The Border Antiquities," show the vault and the dividing wall with the doorways as then standing, but these were both removed, together with the vaulting, in the year 1818.

The preservation of the Priory gatehouse and the Moot Hall is now assured, as both buildings are to be retained as historical monuments.



THE PRIORY GATEHOUSE.



CHAPTER VII.

The Town of Hexham.

HAGUSTALD is mentioned in the "Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation," written by the Venerable Bede at the beginning of the eighth century, but from the middle of the twelfth century it was known as Hextoldesham, or Hextildesham, and the rivulet which skirts the ancient portion of the town was known as the Hextol Burn. It is not improbable that the town, as well as the stream, were named after Hextold, a granddaughter of King Duncan of Scotland, who had been granted lands at Thornton (Newbrough), Stonecroft, Walwick, and Henshaw by David I. This same Hextold afterwards married Malcolm Fitz Malcolm, Earl of Athol, and, as Countess of Athol, she bestowed lands on the monks at Durham.*

During the Saxon period, prior to the Danish invasions, St. Wilfrid's Cathedral Church, one of the wonders of the age, was the outstanding building; and the town, which was small in size, and irregularly built, was clustered round the great basilica. Symeon of Durham says that Chester-le-Street is a place situated between Durham and Hexham.

"This town gave birth to two priors of its church, John, and Richard de Hexham."† St. Aelred, abbot of Rievaulx, was a Hexham man as was also Thomas de Hextoldesham, prior of Lanercost.

*See History of Northumberland - Cadwallader J. Bates, 1895.

† Rev. John Hodgson's Northumberland, 1818.

In common with other places, Hexham suffered severely at the hands of the Danish marauders when they swept over the country in their incursions during the eighth and ninth centuries. On the coming of the Austin Canons, at the beginning of the twelfth century, the control of the Priory and town was transferred to the Archbishops of York, who became both civil and ecclesiastical rulers. They were visitors of the Priory as well as lords of the Regality of Hexham, and in this latter capacity they had kingly privileges. They held their own Courts, and had power of life and death, but they were neither entitled to raise an army for invasion nor levy a subsidy for military purposes within the Regality. Hexham was in the peculiar position of having a non-resident overlord, and during the whole life of the Priory the two most important persons in the town were the prior* and the bailiff, the latter the archbishop's representative and chief officer.

The archbishop's official buildings, the court house and the residence of his bailiff, now the Moot Hall, and his gaol, still known as the Manor Office, occupied the east side of the Market Place, and the Priory the west. The Market Place was thus well protected, and access to it was gained by narrow streets and passages.

The disposition of the roads leading to and from the town of Hexham is well worth attention. Many of these roads are the successors of trackways of remote antiquity, and are actually British in their character. The straight

* A list of the priors and other rulers is combined with the memorial of the late Captain Atkinson, of Newbiggin, a gentleman who was highly esteemed in this district. It was designed by the writer, and is placed in the South Transept.



HEXHAM FROM THE NORTH EAST.



undeviating line of road of the Romans is conspicuous by its absence. The names of the ancient streets and roads are of importance. Cockshaw and Hencotes have no connection with poultry. Hencotes is a combination of the personal name *henga*,* and *cote*, a cottage or small tenement. Cockshaw is a corruption of Cokeshow, or Cokeshoe, *hoe* meaning a small hill or mound, and *coch* is celtic for red. The activity on which the Sele Schools are built, at one time bare, no doubt had red earth as a conspicuous feature. Priestpoppole refers to the quarter where the priests dwelt, and *popple*, a bubbling spring. Gilesgate was the road leading to the Hospital of St. Giles, *gate* being Saxon for road. The meaning of Coastley Row, the old name for Fore Street, is obscure. St. Mary's Chare was the road leading to St. Mary's Church, *chare* being a term for a narrow street, confined to northern towns. Instances are also met with in Alnwick, Morpeth, and Newcastle.

The oldest view of Hexham is Buck's, executed in 1728, and it shows the older portion of the town much as it is to-day.

The earliest published plan, surveyed by J. Wood of Barnard Castle, in 1826, is valuable as indicating the disposition of the town at that time.

The houses of two centuries ago may be divided into three classes. The town houses of the local gentry were of some pretensions, as Hexham was then considered a place of some local importance, and gay doings were the

* One of the ancient streets in Beverley is Hengate.

rule in winter. It possessed a theatre, a cock pit, and assembly rooms, where dances and routs were held.

The tradesmen lived in good houses, mostly stone-built, above their shops and work-rooms. Glovers and hatters were local staple trades. In fact, "Hexham tans," as these gloves were called, had a large sale throughout England.

The working classes lived in white-washed cottages, one storey high, with steep roofs, thatched with ling or heather.

The Market Place is restricted in area, but it is surrounded with interesting buildings. In the centre is a fountain, erected as a memorial to W. A. Temperley, by the members of his family, on one side of which appears an early poem by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, a native of Hexham. On the north side of the Market Place is a fine stone house of the eighteenth century. The south side is occupied by a building named the Shambles, erected in 1766 by Sir Walter Blackett. It has stone pillars on the north side and wooden ones on the south. The roof is covered with Westmorland slates. Embedded in the houses and shops between the Market Place and the Meal Market are the thirteenth century vestiges of St. Mary's Parish Church, which succeeded the edifice first built by St. Wilfrid in 705. It was in the form of a Greek cross. The existing parts are of thirteenth century date. The details of one of the responds of the west end of St. Mary's Church were removed in 1901, and are now lying near the Chapter-house vestibule.

The Moot Hall is on the east side of the Market

Place. In a list of castles and fortalices in Northumberland made in 1415, the Moot Hall appears as, "The Tower of Hexham, belonging to the Archbishop of York." It was the court house of the Regality of Hexham, and the residence of the bailiff. The tower comprises a gateway, with three pairs of gates, two of these closed against the town, the third from the enclosure. The outer gates are further protected by machicolations. The gateway has turrets to the east and west, containing four rooms. The newel stair is in the north-east angle. The main building is to the north, and is three storeys high. The ground floor is vaulted with a plain barrel vault, and was lighted by small windows to the north and east. The next floor appears to have been the court or banqueting room, as the remains of the dais are to be seen at the south end. The upper floor has the remains of a large fireplace in the west wall, which has had all the rich details hacked off. The garderobe tower, which is still open, projects from the east side. The roof is of low pitch, and covered with lead. The parapets have been moved from the outer ends of the corbels and reset on the walls. They originally formed machicolations, as the spaces between the corbels could be used to shoot upon an attacking party below. The outlook turrets rise above the roof, at the south end. The stone stair, which gives access to the first floor, is an addition of the seventeenth century.

The other old building, erected in 1330 as the goal of the regality, is named the Manor Office, as after the dissolution of the Priory the business of the manor was transacted there. It is a rectangular tower without

buttresses, four storeys high, including the dungeons which are mainly below ground level. The only original windows are in the uppermost storey. There is a newel stair, lighted by slits, in the wall on the west side. The walls of the lower storey are eleven feet thick. The chief feature of this curious and unique building, is the grand range of corbels which crown its walls. These are in three projections, and stand out boldly at the angles. The corbels originally carried a parapet, so that the roof could be used for defending the building in case of an attack. The parapet is gone, but the corbels are now protected by a tabling of concrete. The Manor Office is the only mediæval goal built solely for that purpose, remaining in England.

Immediately to the south-east of the Manor Office, is the old Grammar School, which was founded in 1599. The master's house, still existing, was added in 1684.

The Grammar School of Queen Elizabeth is situated to the south-east of the town, and is erected on a site of four acres with accommodation for 120 boys and 120 girls. The head master is Mr. Chas. J. Rogerson, M.A., and the head mistress is Miss Alice M. Ellis, M.A., M.Litt.

St. Wilfrid's War Memorial Hospital, situate in Eastgate, was opened, and the Memorial Cross, in the Abbey Grounds, unveiled by H.R.H. Prince Henry on Thursday, 29th September, 1921. During his visit, His Royal Highness was the guest of Lord and Lady Rayleigh, at Beaufront Castle.

The population of Hexham, according to the census of 1921, was 8,849.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Bells of the Priory Church of St. Andrew.
Hexham.

By the late J. P. GIBSON, F.S.A.

Honorary Member of the Glasgow Archaeological Society ; a Vice-President of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-on-Tyne ; Member of the Committee of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland ; Ordinary Member of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, etc., etc.

[Read on the 27th April, 1887.]

LOOKING back through the history of Hexham in Saxon times, we can find no record that Wilfrid, who built the cathedral church of which he was the first bishop about A.D. 674, placed any bells in it.

Probably Acca, the fifth bishop, who had accompanied Wilfrid as his chaplain in one of his journeys to Rome, may have furnished it with a bell or bells, as we are told that "he finished and decorated the church begun by St. Wilfrid," and that "vases, lamps and other things which belong to the house of God were added by him."

This church, which declined in importance after the termination of its bishopric, was harried and wrecked by the Danes in 875, and again in 995. It remained in a ruinous state until the latter part of the eleventh century, when a partial restoration took place under Eilaf the priest.

Thomas the Second, Archbishop of York, made it into a priory of Canons of St. Augustine in 1113.

Richard, the third Prior of this order, who was formally installed in 1142, in his history of this church, does not make any mention of bells.

There is no definite record of the time when the building of the present Abbey Church dedicated to St. Andrew was commenced, but the style of the earliest portion of it seems to point to the last quarter of the twelfth century. It was erected on the spot where the cathedral church built by Wilfrid had stood, and his crypt still remains under the site of the nave.

From the great massiveness and strength of the tower it seems evident that it was intended to be used as a belfry, and it was probably furnished with bells on its completion about 1240.

If it had bells, the Scotch, in their invasion in 1296, must have taken account of them, as bell metal was of great value in those days.

The town and the abbey continued to be pillaged at intervals until 1346, when King David, after plundering the church, marched southward and was defeated and taken prisoner at the Battle of Neville's Cross.

In 1369, a *levee en masse* was made in the regality of Hexhamshire of the whole of the male population between the ages of sixteen and sixty, by the command of Edward the Third, to meet a threatened Scottish incursion.

Subsequent invasions do not seem to have much damaged the monastery, although the Scottish raids continued until the sixteenth century.

Through all this troublous period the Abbey bells would often ring out upon the vale their wild notes of alarm, calling to arms the fighting men, and bringing within the precinct walls of the Abbey and within the Peace of the Sanctuary the women and children, to find there such

feeble defence against the murderous Scot as the harassed church was able to afford them.

In documents relating to the Priory of Hexham, the first mention of bells occurs in a decree of excommunication issued against the canons by Archbishop Greenfield, who had appointed a Yorkshireman as prior instead of allowing the canons as usual to elect a prior from their own body. This had roused the ire of the canons, and they refused to comply with the mandate of the Archbishop. On the 2nd day of August, 1311, they were excommunicated.

In January of the following year a compromise was effected, the sturdy northern monks practically carrying their point, and no archbishop ever afterwards attempted to control their right of election.

In the decree of excommunication the phrase *pulsatis campanis* (the bells being rung) may be only the usual formula, but it certainly goes to prove the existence of the bells.

Again in 1467 from Archbishop Neville we have an edict of excommunication against a marauding party who had burned the village of Acomb, about a mile and a half from Hexham. In this village there was property belonging both to the Archbishop and to the cathedral of York.

The edict contains this phrase, *Campanis, pulsatis candelis, accensis et extinctis, ac in eorum vituperium in terram projectis cruceque in manibus reverenter erecta*. (Bells being rung, candles lighted and extinguished, and in reproach of them being trodden under foot upon the ground and the cross being raised reverently in the hands.)

As neither the names nor the persons of the offenders were known, this excommunication would not prove very efficacious.

In 1475 an account of the election of William of Bywell to the Priorate records that after the chanting of the *Te Deum*, the bells were solemnly rung.

At the dissolution of the monasteries throughout England, when the Commissioners appointed by Henry VIII. arrived at Hexham on the 28th September, 1536, the bells rang in the first act of the rebellion, called the Pilgrimage of Grace, which spread like wildfire through the Northern counties, and was not suppressed until the year following, when it was stamped out in blood by the Duke of Norfolk, who, acting on the instructions received from the King, caused "to be tied up without further delay all the monks and canons caught in open rebellion."

This "tying up" was by the neck, and Hexham's last prior finished his days at Tyburn, although tradition reports he was hanged at the gates of his own monastery.

On the entry of the Northumbrian Commissioners into the town (the Southerners had prudently remained at Corbridge), they found an armed assembly, headed by some of the canons ready to meet them.

The old chronicle says, "the common bell of the town was rongen, and straight after the sound of it, the Grete bell of the monastry was likewise ronge."

The common bell of the town may have been the bell of St. Mary's Church, which at that time was in existence, and which is supposed to have had no tower, but merely a bell gable. The Grete bell was the bell named Mary, which Wallis says was also called the Fray bell, and was

never rung alone except on the occasion of a fire or the approach of an enemy. It is said to have weighed seventy hundredweights, which is also the weight of the present great bell of St. Dunstan of Canterbury.

Wright, in his History of Hexham, written in 1823, states that the inscriptions of the six old bells were in Lombardic capitals and as follows :—

1.—xAD PRIMOS CANTUS PUISAT NOS REX GLORIOSUS.

“Puisat” is here evidently a mistake, the word intended being “Pulsat.”

2.—xET CANTARE TRA-I FACIET NOS VOX—

The incompleteness of this inscription leaves an opening for ingenious conjecture.

3.—xEST NOBIS DIGNA KATERINE VOX BENIGNA.

4.—xOMNIBUS IN ANNUS EST VOX DEO ORATA
IOHANNIS. A.D. MCCCCIIII.

5.—xANDREA MI CARE IOHANNI CONSOCIARE. A.D.
MCCCCIIII.

6.—xEST MEA VOX ORATA DUM SIM MARIA VOCATA.
A.D. MCCCCIIII.

These inscriptions, giving us the date of 1404, show us that at least three of the bells had been made during the Priorate of John of Hexham, who was appointed about ten years before by Archbishop Waldby, he, after enquiry, having displaced Prior Marton, who had become old and unfit for work, and had suffered the priory to fall into a state of decay.

Prior John appears to have been a man of energy, and to have had much force of character, and we find that five years after the hanging of these bells he went out in rebellion against Henry IV., along with the Earl of Northumberland and his Scottish allies, and came near to

being hanged himself, having had to flee from the monastery to save his life. He and his convent had, however, the good fortune to receive a free pardon from the King shortly afterwards.

Usually the great or tenor bell is named after the patron saint of the church in which it is hung. In this case it was the second bell in size which was named after St. Andrew.

The third bell, John, might be named after the prior himself. Wright says the other three were probably more ancient.

These six bells are mentioned by Mr William Bell, of High Shield, near Hexham, in a letter written by him to the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and published in 1755. He says:—"Six bells, which were broken and in great disorder about sixteen years ago, we had re-cast into eight, and they are now, without controversy, as fine a ring as any in England of their weight. They were made and hung by your London artists."

At this time change ringing had been introduced, and had become a fashionable pastime, so fashionable indeed that in many of the belfreys rules were posted up imposing fines on anyone who should ring the bells in spurs, or who should bring a whip into the belfry.

The peal of eight bells was cast in 1742 by Thomas Lester of London, who had at that time the celebrated foundry now carried on by the firm of Messrs Mears and Stainbank. Thomas Lester had been foreman to Richard Phelps, under whose management the foundry had very much increased in importance. He had been taken into partnership, and at the death of Richard Phelps in 1738

he bequeathed to him by will the whole plant of materials and implements on the premises. In 1743, a year after casting the Hexham bells, Thomas Lester cast two bells for Westminster Abbey, which are still in existence.

Of Thomas Lester's peal only two bells—the treble and the tenor—remain intact, the other six having been broken and re-cast. The inscriptions on the present bells fairly show their history :—

Treble.—1742. T. LESTER.

2nd.—THOMAS MEARS OF LONDON FOUNDER 1833.

3rd.—THOMAS LESTER. 1742.

ALFREDUS S. LAWSON. REFECIT A.D. 1884.

4th has no inscription, but the date 1775 is roughly chiselled on the upper part of the bell, where an inscription has apparently been erased.

5th.—THOMAS LESTER OF LONDON MADE US ALL & TOBIAS BENTON HANGED US ALL.

ALFREDUS S. LAWSON, ME ET TERTIUM EX MEIS SOCIIS REFECIT A.D. 1884.

6th.—REV^D W. FLEMING M.A. MINISTER.

REV^D ROBT. CLARKE LECTURER

RALPH LONGSTAFF MATTH^w LEE EDW^d SWIN-
BURN MATTH^w COULSON CHURCHWARDENS.

THOMAS MEARS OF LONDON FECIT. 1801.

7th.—1742. THOMAS LESTER MADE ME.

ALFREDUS S. LAWSON ME REFECIT. 1884.

On Lester's bell, re-cast 1884, after the inscription there was scratched :

“AND GAVE TOWARDS WOODWORK AND IRON-
WORK £10.

Tenor.—WALTER BLACKETT, ESQ., LORD.

REV^D MR W^m GRAHAM MINISTER.

W^m VAZIE, JOHN JOHNSON, THO^s LEE & ROBT
ROBSON, CHURCHWARDENS. 1742. THOMAS
LESTER OF LONDON MADE US ALL.

Sir Walter Blackett, whose name occurs on the tenor bell, was nephew of the Lord of the Manor, at whose marriage rejoicings the great bell Mary was broken. The diameters of the bells are :—

Treble -	-	-	28 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.
2nd -	-	-	30 $\frac{1}{2}$ „
3rd -	-	-	32 „
4th -	-	-	34 $\frac{1}{2}$ „
5th -	-	-	36 „
6th -	-	-	40 „
7th -	-	-	43 „
Tenor -	-	-	48 „

The treble bell has been very much chiselled on the edge in tuning, and is still scarcely in harmony with the rest of the peal.

The 2nd, 4th, and 6th have been chiselled inside on the sound-bow. The 3rd, 5th, and 7th have been tuned by turning, the 5th, inside on the sound-bow, and the 3rd and 7th on the rim. The tenor bell has been slightly tuned by chiselling inside on the sound-bow, and a small piece of the central part of the cannons has been broken away, fortunately without injuring the tone of the bell. Lester's 7th bell, re-cast in 1883, was a maiden bell, never having been tuned.

The note of the tenor bell is E flat, and its weight is about 21 hundredweight.

Tobias Benton, who hanged Lester's peal, used the oak beams of the old bell cage in constructing the new one. That built by him has a gangway about six feet wide around it, rendering access to the bells very easy.

Two of the beams in the base of this have marks showing where the bushes for the old bell gudgeons have been. These point out the fact that two of the old bell pits occupied the whole width of the tower.

On the east side of the cage is a peculiar old oak windlass, about 7 feet long, of octagonal shape, having holes for the insertion of handspikes. This appears to have been used in the moving of the bells.

There is no Sanctus bell, nor any record of the ringing of the Curfew bell.

Formerly a bell was rung every week day morning at half-past five o'clock, to awaken the people who began work at six o'clock, and it was also rung at six o'clock in the evening as a signal for them to finish their day's work. The shortening of workmen's hours caused this old custom to be discontinued some years ago.

On two occasions sets of 5,040 changes have been rung on these bells, once in 1848, and again in 1884, after the re-hanging of the three bells which were then re-cast.

The bells are now rung on Sundays for 15 minutes at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., and then the fifth bell is chimed for the quarter hours immediately preceding the church services. This is done by the Hexham Abbey Guild of Ringers, Mr Robert Robson, the clerk, taking the tenor bell.

The clock put into the church this year by Messrs Potts and Son, of Leeds, to replace the first clock, which was set up in 1822 by Messrs Handley and Moore, of London, chimes the quarter hours on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 7th, and strikes the hours on the tenor bell. The chimes are those known as the Cambridge chimes.

Sir Walter Blackett, whose name occurs on the tenor bell, was nephew of the Lord of the Manor, at whose marriage rejoicings the great bell Mary was broken. The diameters of the bells are :—

Treble -	-	-	28 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.
2nd -	-	-	30 $\frac{1}{2}$ „
3rd -	-	-	32 „
4th -	-	-	34 $\frac{1}{2}$ „
5th -	-	-	36 „
6th -	-	-	40 „
7th -	-	-	43 „
Tenor -	-	-	48 „

The treble bell has been very much chiselled on the edge in tuning, and is still scarcely in harmony with the rest of the peal.

The 2nd, 4th, and 6th have been chiselled inside on the sound-bow. The 3rd, 5th, and 7th have been tuned by turning, the 5th, inside on the sound-bow, and the 3rd and 7th on the rim. The tenor bell has been slightly tuned by chiselling inside on the sound-bow, and a small piece of the central part of the cannons has been broken away, fortunately without injuring the tone of the bell. Lester's 7th bell, re-cast in 1883, was a maiden bell, never having been tuned.

The note of the tenor bell is E flat, and its weight is about 21 hundredweight.

Tobias Benton, who hanged Lester's peal, used the oak beams of the old bell cage in constructing the new one. That built by him has a gangway about six feet wide around it, rendering access to the bells very easy.

Two of the beams in the base of this have marks showing where the bushes for the old bell gudgeons have been. These point out the fact that two of the old bell pits occupied the whole width of the tower.

On the east side of the cage is a peculiar old oak windlass, about 7 feet long, of octagonal shape, having holes for the insertion of handspikes. This appears to have been used in the moving of the bells.

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The first clock had only chimes for three instead of four quarter hours, so that when they commenced correctly at mid-day, they got curiously inverted between one and three o'clock, and only resumed their normal order after three, six, and nine o'clock for an hour each time.

This paper is incomplete, as the books containing the accounts of the churchwardens before 1810 are missing, but a strict search is now being made for them, and it is to be hoped that they have not been destroyed, as they doubtless contain much valuable information respecting the church and the bells.

In the book at present accessible, we find the following payments to the bell-ringers and sexton :—

1810. Rejoicings. For the defeat of the French in Portugal, £1 0s. 0d.

This was undoubtedly for the battle of Busaco, where Wellington gained one of his first successes against Napoleon's generals.

From 1813 to 1815 there are seven days of rejoicings for victories not specified. There are payments of 6s. for tolling the Great Bell at the death of King George IV., and King William IV., and £1 for ringing muffled peals on the day of King William IV.'s interment. In 1831, the ringers received £1 for ringing on Royal Oak Day. After that date the special days are not given, being classed generally under the head of holidays, and as this is the year of the Queen's Jubilee, we may fitly close our record with the payment of £2 to the ringers on the day of the Queen's Coronation fifty years ago.

Reprinted from *Archæologia Aeliana* Vol. XII., Page 299.

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PLACES OF INTEREST IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
OF HEXHAM.

The distances are in miles, in a direct line from the town. The distance by road may be taken at one quarter to one third more.

PLACE	DESCRIPTION		
AESICA—Or Great Chesters, is a station on the line of the Roman Wall ...	14½	W.	
ALLENDALE TOWN—A favourite inland health resort	8	S.W.	
AYDON CASTLE—Fortified 13th century Manor house	4½	E.N.E.	
BARDON MILL—Best point on railway for Borcovicus	9½	W	
BARRASFORD—Old village with inn, station on N.B.R.	6	N. by W.	
BELTINGHAM—Curious ancient church, fine yew trees	9	W.	
BIRTLEY—Norman church, ruins of small castle ...	9½	N.N.W.	
BLANCHLAND—Ancient village, remains of an abbey of White Canons ...	8¾	S. by E.	
BORCOVICUS—Largest station in Northumberland on the Roman Wall. Extensive remains and fine views ...	9½	W.N.W.	
BROOMLEE LOUGH—The second largest of the five Northumberland lakes ...	9½	W.N.W.	
BYWELL—Village with two old churches, ruins of a castle, market cross, near Stocksfield	7¼	E. by S.	
CILURNUM—Now Chesters, Roman station, museum, Roman bridge ...	4½	N.N.W.	
CHERRYBURN—Birthplace of Thomas Bewick, the wood engraver ...	8½	E.	
CHIPCHASE CASTLE—Edwardian tower, with Jacobæan manor house added ...	8	N.N.W.	
CHOLLERFORD—Good inn, resort for anglers and convenient centre for Roman Wall ...	4½	N. by N.	
CHOLLERTON—Old church, Roman columns re-used in the south aisle ...	5	N.	
COCKLAW—One of the best examples of an early pele tower ...	4½	N.	
CORBRIDGE—Early English church, Saxon tower, tower arch Roman, fortified vicarage, ancient market-place ...	3½	E.	
CORSTOPITUM—Roman town, just west of Corbridge. The second largest in England in Roman times, important and extensive remains; museum ...	3½	E.	
DILSTON—Remains of castle, chapel, the home of the Earl of Derwentwater ...	2½	E. by S.	
DIPTON MILL—Inn and bridge over west Dipton burn	2	S. by W.	

DOTLAND PARK—Anciently the country house and hunting lodge of the priors of Hexham; curious 15th century remains ..	2½	S.
FALLOWFIELD—Lead mines, Roman inscription on quarry	2¾	N. by W.
GUNNERTON—Near by is a British village ...	7	N. by W.
HALTON—Small castle, Jacobæan additions, ancient chapel	4½	N.E. by E.
HAUGHTON CASTLE—Important 13th century castle	5½	N. by W.
HAYDON BRIDGE—Large ancient village, old bridge, spa well	5¾	W.
HEDDON-ON-THE-WALL—Roman Station of Vindobala, close by ancient church ...	8	E.
HOUSESTEADS—Modern farm on site of Borcovicus	9½	W.N.W.
HUNNUM—Roman name of the station near Halton.		
LANGLEY CASTLE—Large 14th century castle, restored in late years	6½	W. by S.
LINNELS—Curious bridge built in 1581. Near the field of the battle of Hexham, 1464 ...	2	S.E.
MATFEN—Picturesque village, well kept, the seat of Sir Hugh Blackett, Bart. ...	7½	N.E.
MELKRIDGE—Here is a good Bastel house of the 16th century	12	W.
OVINGHAM—Here is one of the four Saxon church towers in Tynedale; the burial place of Thomas Bewick	9½	E.
PROCOLITIA—A station on the Roman Wall ...	6½	N.W.
PRUDHOE CASTLE—A large castle, considerable remains	9¾	E.
ST. JOHN LEE—Modern church on ancient site, dedicated to St. John Baptist ...	1	N. by W.
ST. OSWALDS—Near this the battle of Hefenfeld was fought in 633	3½	N.
SIMONBURN—Fine 13th century church, and remains of interesting early pele tower ...	7	N.W. by N.
SWINBURNE CASTLE—Georgian mansion in fine well wooded park, in which is a fine prehistoric monolith	7	N.
SWINBURNE LITTLE—Remains of 14th century pele tower	8½	N.
VINDOLANA—The Roman name of Chesterholm, where is the only Roman milestone <i>in situ</i> in England	11	W.
WARDEN—Saxon church, picturesquely situated ...	2	N.W.
WELTON—Fine early pele, Jacobæan extensions ...	8	E. by N.
WEST BOAT—The site of the ancient ferry under the control of the priory	2	N.W. by W.
WYLAM—Birthplace of George Stephenson the engineer	13	E.



Suggested restoration of fragments at Hexham and Durham by W. G. Collingwood.

ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA.

Page 22, line 11, for "Abberborthock," read "Aberbrothock"
(equals Arbroath).

Haltwhistle Church was at one time the property of Arbroath Abbey, and closely resembles the Church of Crail, in Fifeshire, which also belonged Arbroath.

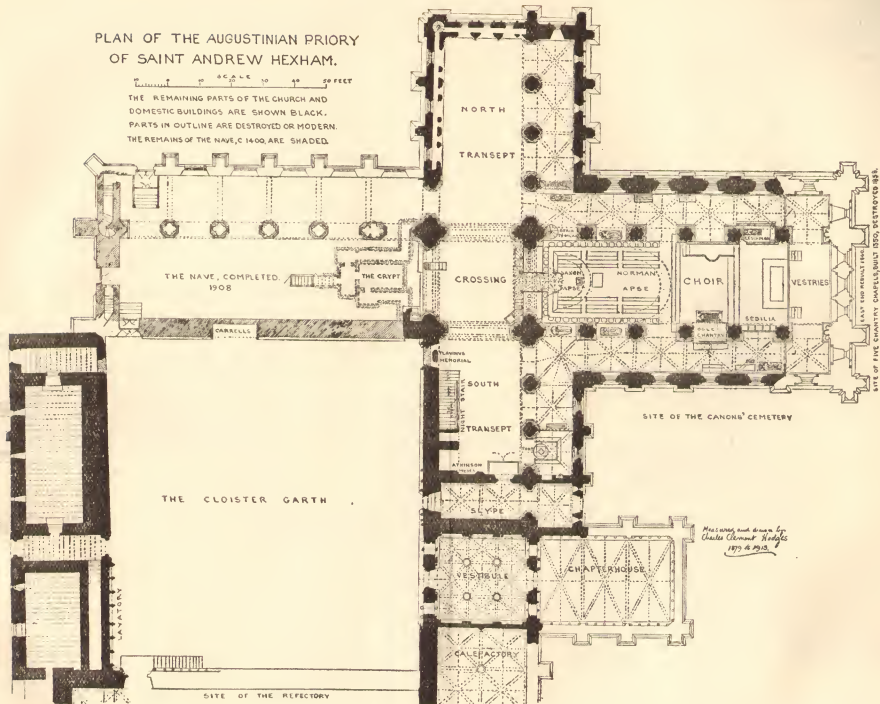
Page 56, lines 23 to 24, the inscription reads :—"ORATE PRO ANIMA DOMINI THOMÆ S(MITHSON) PRIORIS HUIUS ECCLESIE QUI FECIT HOC OPUS," translated is as follows :—"Pray for the soul of Master Thomas Smithson, prior of this church who made this work."

Page 60, footnote, for "occur," read "occurs."

Page 69, line 8, for "three," read "few," *as* "hog-backed" grave-covers have been found at Falstone, Simonburn, and Warden.

PLAN OF THE AUGUSTINIAN PRIORY
OF SAINT ANDREW HEXHAM.

THE REMAINING PARTS OF THE CHURCH AND DOMESTIC BUILDINGS ARE SHOWN BLACK. PARTS IN OUTLINE ARE DESTROYED OR MODERN. THE REMAINS OF THE NAVE, c 1400, ARE SHADED.





PLAN B.

NORTH

EAST

SOUTH

REFERENCE.

B. BRACKET.

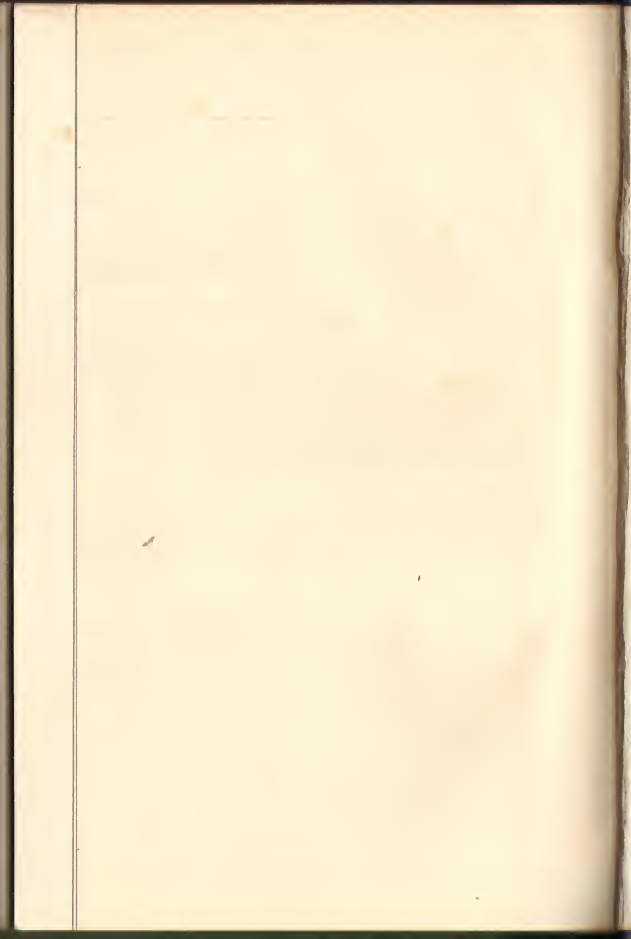
L. LAMP NICHES.

V. VENTILATOR.

F. FOUNDATION
COURSE

R.I. ROMAN
INSCRIPTIONS

Measured and
Drawn by
C. C. Hodges.



Review of First Edition.

Guide

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